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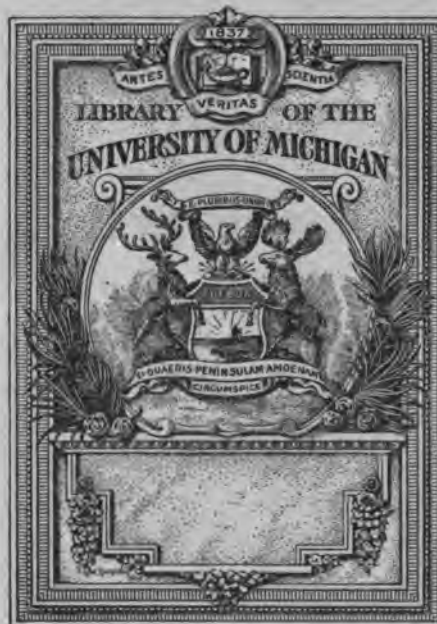
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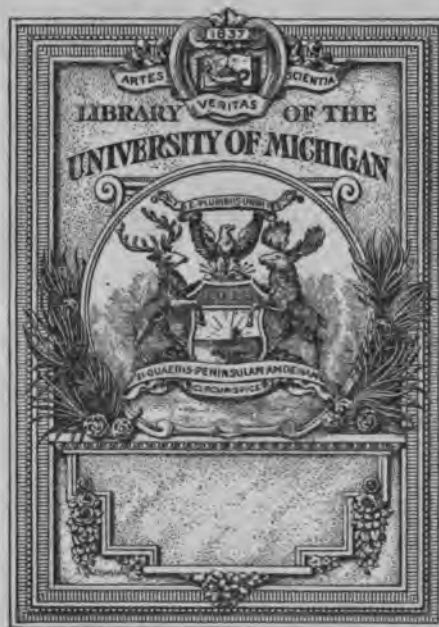




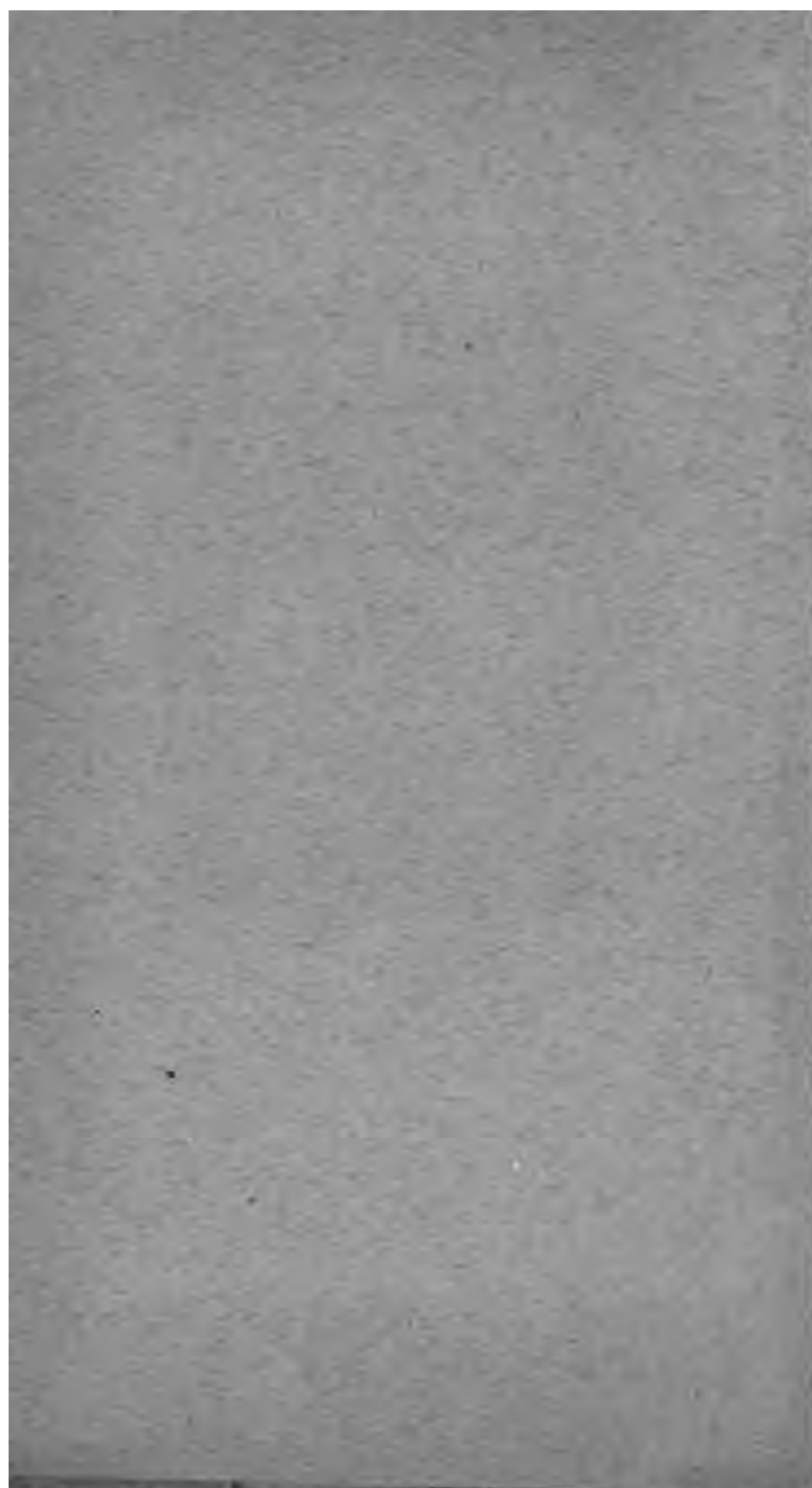
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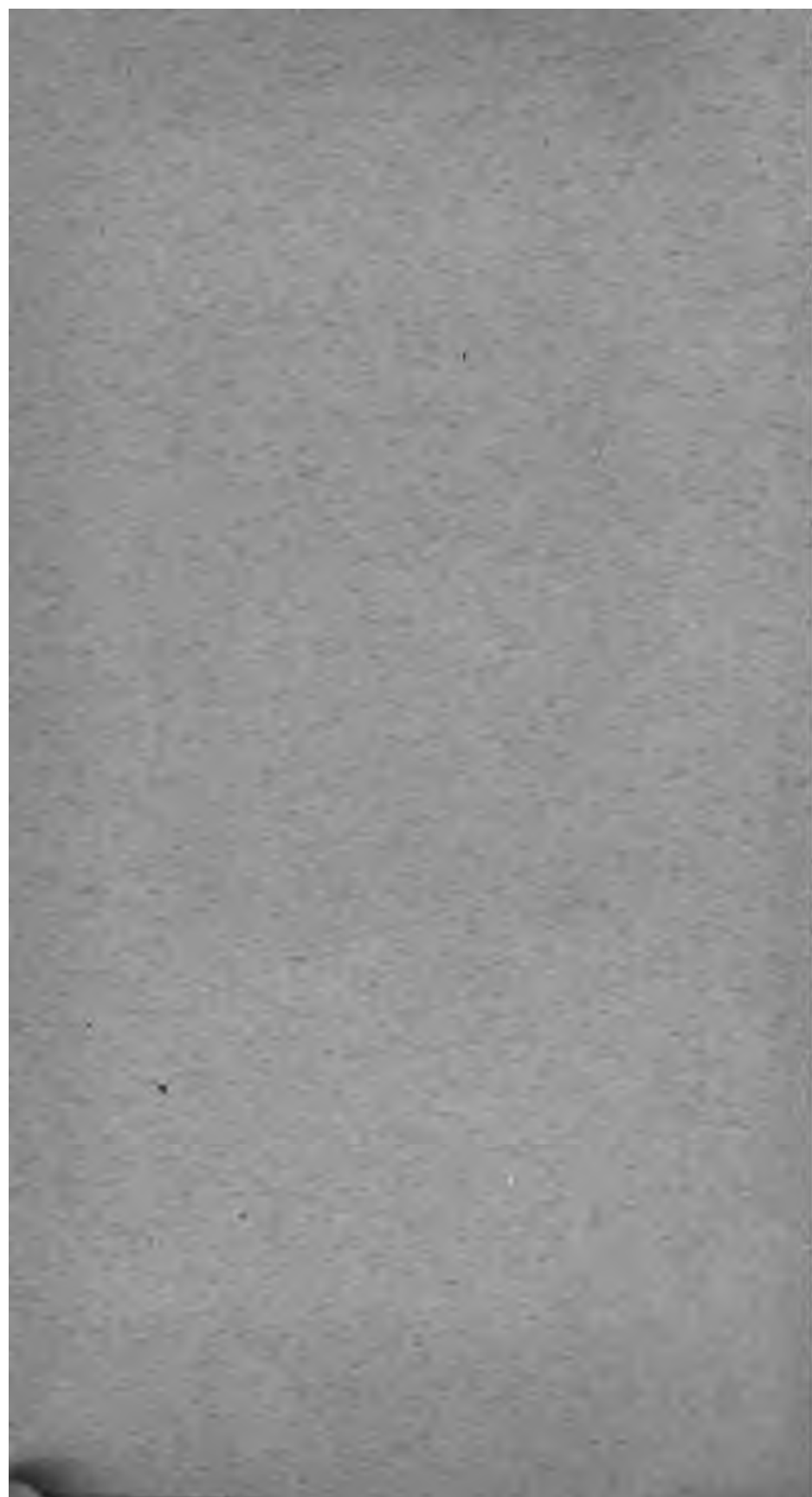
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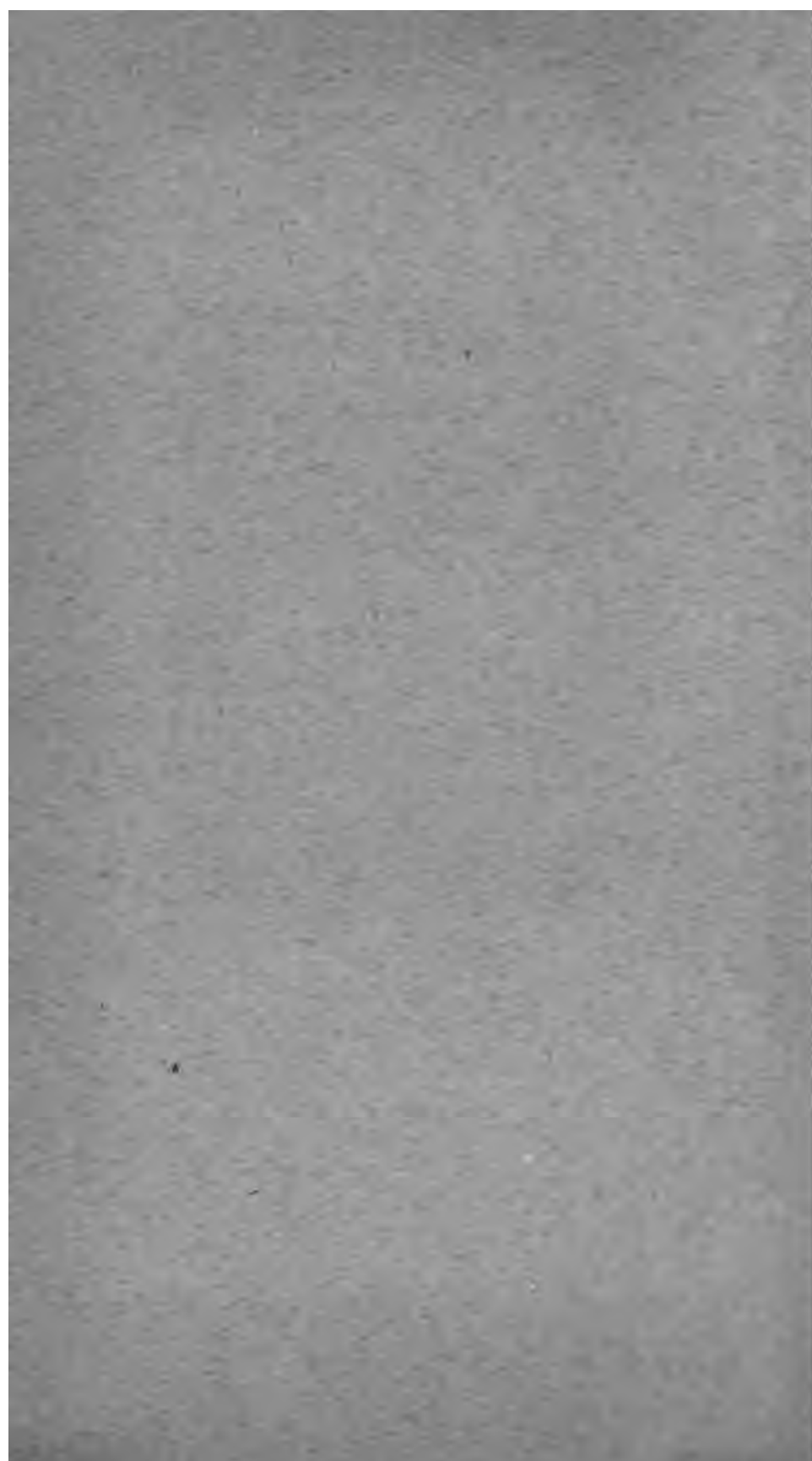
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Vol. CLXXIII.

THE QUEST OF THE GOLDEN FLEECE:

A ROMANCE OF THE OUTSKIRTS.¹

BY HUGH CLIFFORD, C.M.G.

ALL the wintry afternoon we had been worming our way down the Thames, the big steamer filtering slowly through the throng of crafts like a 'bus moving ponderously amid crowded traffic. When at last we won free of the river, the Channel chop took us on its knee and rocked us roughly, while the scud of wind and rain slapped us in the face with riotous horse-play. As we came up from dinner and struggled aft, our feet slipped and slithered over the wet decks, and the shouts of the frozen Lascars at the look-out reached us through the sopping gloom, despairing as the howls of souls in torment. The ugly, hopeless melancholy of our surroundings accorded well with

the mood which possessed the majority of those on board, for we were outward-bound, and men who leave England for the good of their purses carry heavy hearts with them at the start. In the smoking-room, therefore, with coat-collars tugged up about our ears, and hands thrust deeply into our pockets, we sat smoking with mournful earnestness, glaring at our neighbours with the open animosity of the genial Briton.

Through the thickening fog of the tobacco-smoke the figure of the man seated immediately opposite to me was dimly visible, but presently his unusual appearance claimed my closer attention and aroused my curiosity. His emaciated body was wrapped in a huge ulster, from

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the up-turned collar of which a head emerged that I can only describe as being like nothing so much as a death's-head moth. He was clean-shaven, and his cheeks were as hollow as saucers; his temples were pinched and prominent; from the bottom of deeply sunken sockets little wild eyes glared like savage things held fast in a gin. The mouth was set hard, as though its owner was enduring agony and trying his best to repress a scream. As much of his hair as his cap and his coat-collar suffered to be seen was of a dirty yellow white, yet in some indefinable way the man did not give the impression of being old. Rather he seemed to be one prematurely broken; one who suffered acutely and unceasingly; one who, with rigid self-control, maintained a tight grip upon himself, as though all his nerves were on edge. I had marked a somewhat similar expression of concentrated determination upon the faces of fellow-passengers engaged in fighting the demon of seasickness; but this fellow sucked at his pipe, and obviously drew a measure of comfort from it, in a fashion which showed that he was indifferent to the choppy motion. Yet though those buried eyes of his were glaring and savage—eyes that seemed to be eternally seeking some means of escape from a haunting peril—they were not restless, but rather were fixed in a venomous scowl, while the man himself, dead quiet save for the light that glinted from them, was apparently sunken in a fathomless abstraction.

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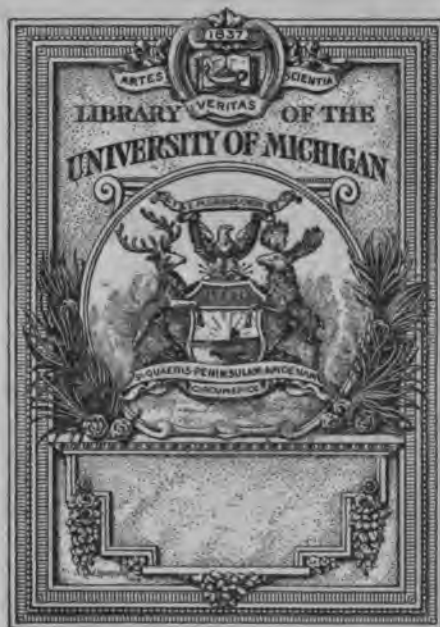




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"Snakes!" he exclaimed genially. "This is *mighty* cheerful!" His strident twang seemed to cut wedges out of the foggy silence. "We look as though we had swallowed a peck of tenpenny nails, and the blamed things were sitting heavy on our stomachs! Come, let us be friendly. I ain't doing any trade in sore-headed bears. Wake up, sonny!" And he dug his melancholy neighbour in the ribs with an aggressive and outrageous thumb.

It was for all the world as though he had touched the spring that sets in motion the clock-work of a mechanical toy. The man's cap flew from his head, disclosing a scalp ill-covered with sparse hairs and scarred like his face, as he leaped to his feet with a scream, torn suddenly, as it were, from the depths of his self-absorbed abstraction. Casting quick, nervous glances over

his shoulder, he backed into the nearest corner, his hands clawing at the air, his eyes hunted, defiant, yet abject. His whole figure was instinct with terror—terror seeking impotently to defend itself against unnumbered enemies. His teeth were set, his gums were drawn back over them in two rigid white lines, a sort of snarling cry broke from him—a cry that seemed to be the expression of furious rage, pain, and agonisingly concentrated effort.

It all took place in a fraction of a second—as quickly as a man "jumps" when badly startled—and as quickly he recovered his balance, and pulled himself together. Then he cast a murderous glance at the American, who at that moment presented a picture of petrified astonishment, let fly a venomous oath at him, and slammed out of the room in a towering rage.

"Goramercey!" ejaculated the American, limply. "I want a drink. Who'll join me?" But no one responded to his invitation.

That was the occasion of my first meeting with Timothy O'Hara; but as I subsequently travelled half across the world in his company, was admitted to his friendship, and heard him relate his experiences, not once but many times, I am able to supply the curious with the key to his extraordinary behaviour that evening. I regret that it is impossible to give his story in his own words, for he told it graphically and with force, but unfortunately his very proper indignation invariably got the better of his dis-

cretion, with the result that he frequently waxed blasphemous in the course of his narrative, and at times was rendered altogether inarticulate by rage. I flatter myself, however, that the version which I now offer to the reader is faithful and accurate in all essential details; and my own intimate knowledge of that gentle race called Mûruts, at whose hands O'Hara fared so evilly, has helped me to fill in such blanks as may have existed in the tale as it originally reached me.

Some years ago there was a man in North Borneo, whose name does not matter,—a man who had the itch of travel in him, and loved untrodden places for their own sake. He undertook to explore the interior of the No Man's Land which the Chartered Company euphemistically describes as its "property." He made his way inland from the western coast, and little more was heard of him for several months. At the end of that time a haze of disquieting rumours, as palpable as the used-up fever-laden wind that blows eternally from the interior, reached the little squalid stations on the seashore, and shortly afterwards the body of the explorer, terribly mangled and mutilated, was sluiced down-country by a freshet, and brought up on a sand-spit near the mouth of a river on the east coast. Here it was discovered by a couple of white men, who with the aid of a handful of unwilling natives buried it with becoming

state, since it was the only thing with a European father and mother which had ever travelled across the centre of North Borneo from sea to sea since the beginning of time.

In life the explorer had been noted for his beard, a great yellow cascade of hair which fell down his breast from his lip to his waist, and when his corpse was found this ornament was missing. The Chartered Company, whose business it is to pay dividends under adverse circumstances, does not profess to be a philanthropical institution, and cannot spend its hard-squeezed revenues upon putting the fear of death into people who have made too free with the lives of white folk, as is the practice in other parts of Asia. Therefore no steps were taken by the local administration to punish the Mûruts of the interior who had amused themselves by putting the explorer to an ugly death; but the knowledge that the murdered man's beard had been shorn from his chin by some truculent savage, and was even then ornamenting the knife-handle of a Mûrut chief in the heart of the island, rankled in the minds of the white men on the spot. The wise and prudent members of the community talked a great deal, said roundly that the thing was a shame and an abomination, and took care to let their discretion carry them no further than the spoken word. The young and foolish did not say so much, but the recovery of that wisp of hair became to many of them a tremendous ambition,

a dream, something that made even existence in North Borneo tolerable while it presented itself to their imaginations as a feat possible of accomplishment. With a few this dream became an *idée fixe*, an object in a life that otherwise were unendurable, and it may even have saved a few from the folly of immediate suicide. The quest would be the most hazardous conceivable, a fitting enterprise for men rendered desperate by the circumstances into the midst of which fate had thrust them; and a man might well feel that there was more satisfaction to be found in throwing away his life in an attempt to cleanse the stained honour of his breed than in bathetically blowing out his brains. The former was a romantic, nay, a glorious, venture; the latter earns a very general contempt, is even branded as an act of cowardice, and cowardice is the one sin of which the men of the outskirts fear to be accused.

Sitting at home in England, with pleasant things to distract the mind all about you, and with nothing at hand more dangerous than a motor-car, all this pother concerning the hairs off a dead man's chin may appeal to you as something absurdly sentimental and irrational; but try for the moment to place yourself in the position of an isolated white man at an out-station of North Borneo. Picture to yourself a tumble-down thatched bungalow standing on a roughly cleared hill, with four Chinese shops and a dilapidated police-station squatting on the bank

of a black, creeping river. Rub in a smudge of blue-green forest, shutting you up on flanks, front, and rear. Fill that forest with scattered huts, wherein squalid natives live the lives of beasts—natives whose language you do not know, whose ideas you do not understand, who make their presence felt only by means of savage howls raised by them in their drunken orgies,—natives whose hatred of you can only be kept from active expression by the fear which your armed readiness may inspire. Add to this merciless heat, faint exhausted air, an occasional bout of the black fever of the country, and not enough of work to preserve your mind from rust. Remember that the men who are doomed to live in these places get no sport, have no recreations, no companionship; that the long, empty, suffocating days trail by one by one, bringing no hope of change, and that the only communication with the outer world is kept up fitfully by certain dingy steam-tramps which are always behind time, and which may, or may not, arrive once a month. Can you wonder that amid such surroundings men wax melancholy, that they take to brooding over all manner of trivial things in a fashion which is not quite sane, and that the knowledge that their continued existence is dependent upon the wholesome awe in which white folk are held sometimes gets upon their nerves, and makes them feverishly anxious to vindicate the honour of their race? When you have let the full meaning of these things sink

into your minds, you will begin to understand why so much excitement prevailed in North Borneo concerning the reported ownership of the deceased explorer's beard.

Timothy O'Hara and Harold Bateman had lived lives such as those which I have described for half-a-dozen years or more. They had had ample leisure in which to turn the matter of the explorer's beard over and over in their minds, till the thought of it had bred something like fanaticism, a kind of still, white-hot rage, within them. It chanced that their leave of absence fell due upon one and the same day. It followed that they put their heads together and decided to start upon a private raid of their own into the interior of the Mûrut country, with a view to redeeming the trophy. It also followed that they made their preparations with the utmost secrecy, and that they enlisted a dozen villainous little Dyaks from Sarawak to act as their punitive force. The whole thing was highly improper and very illegal, but it promised adventurous experiences, and both Bateman and O'Hara were young and not over wise. Also, it must be urged in extenuation of their conduct that they had the effects of some six years' crushing monotony to work off, that they had learned to regard the Mûruts of the interior as their natural enemies, and that the ugliness and the deadly solitude of their existence had rendered them savage, just as the tamest beast becomes wild and ferocious when it finds it-

self held in the painful grip of a trap.

I am in nowise concerned to justify their doings: my part is to record them. O'Hara and Bateman vanished one day from the last outpost of quasi-civilisation, having given out that they were off up-country in search of big game—which was a fact. Their little expedition slipped into the forest, and the wilderness swallowed it. When once they had pushed out into the unknown interior they were gone past power of recall,—were lost as completely as a needle in a ten-acre hay-field; and they breathed more freely because they had escaped from the narrow zone wherein the law of the white man runs, and need guide themselves for the future merely by the dictates of their own rudimentary notions of right and wrong.

They had a pretty awful time of it, so far as I can gather; for the current of the rivers, which crept towards them, black and oily, from the upper country, was dead against them, and the rapids soon caused them to abandon their boats. Then they tramped it, trudging with dogged perseverance up and down the hills, clambering painfully up sheer ascents, slipping down the steep pitches on the other side, splashing and labouring through the swamps betwixt hill and hill, or wading waist-deep across wastes of rank *lâlang*-grass, from the green surface of which the refracted heat smote them under their hat-brims with the force of blows. Aching in every limb, half-blinded by the sweat

that trickled into their eyes, flayed by the sun, mired to the ears in the morasses, torn by thorn-thickets, devoured by tree-leeches, stung by all manner of jungle-insects, and oppressed by the weight of self-imposed effort that pride forbade them to abandon, they struggled forward persistently, fiercely, growing more savage and more vindictive at every painful step. The golden fleece of beard, which was the object of their quest, became an oriflamme, in the wake of which they floundered eternally through the inferno of an endless fight. Their determination to recover it became a madness, a possession; it filled their minds to the exclusion of aught else, nerved them to fresh endeavour, spurred them out of their weariness, and would not suffer them to rest. But the bitterness of their travail incensed them mightily against the Mûrut folk, whose lack of reverence for white men had imposed so tremendous a task upon these self-appointed champions of their race; and as they sat over their unpalatable meals when the day's toil was ended, they talked together in blood-thirsty fashion of the vengeance they would wreak, and the punishment they would exact from the tribe which was discovered to be in possession of the object of their search.

One feature of their march was that prudence forbade a halt. The Mûrut of North Borneo is a person of mean understanding, who requires time wherein to set his slow intellect in motion. He is a dipsomaniac, a homicide by

training and predilection, and he has a passion for collecting other people's skulls, which is as unscrupulous and as fanatical as that of the modern philatelist. Whenever he encounters a stranger he immediately falls to coveting that stranger's skull; but as he is a creature of poor courage, it is essential to his comfort that he should win possession of it only by means that will not endanger his own skin. The question as to how such means may be contrived presents a difficult problem for his solution, and it takes his groping mind from two to three days in which to hit upon a workable plan. The explorer, as Bateman and O'Hara were aware, lost his life because, overcome by fatigue, he allowed himself to commit the mistake of spending more than a single night under a hospitable Mûrut roof-tree, and so gave time to his hosts to plot his destruction. Had he only held steadily upon his way, all might have been well with him: for in a country where every village is at enmity with its neighbours, a short march would have carried him into a stranger's land, which he should have been able to quit in its turn ere the schemes for his immolation hatched therein had had leisure in which to ripen. O'Hara and Bateman, therefore, no matter how worn out they might be by that everlasting, clambering tramp across that cruel huddle of hill-caps, were rowelled by necessity into pushing forward, and still forward, as surely as the day dawned. They felt much as the urchin Jo must have done



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"Evening, you folk!" said a nasal voice in the doorway, breaking discordantly upon the sulky silence which brooded over us, and I looked up to

see the figure of a typical "down-easter," slim and alert, standing just within the room. He had a keen hard face on him, like a meat-axe, and the wet of the rain stood upon it in drops. He jerked his head at us in collective greeting, walked through the haze of smoke with free gait and swinging shoulders, and threw himself down in a heap on the horse-hair bench beside the man whose strange appearance had rivetted my attention. Seated thus he looked round at us with quick humorous glances, as though our British solemnity, which made each one of us grimly isolated in a crowd, struck him as at once amusing and impossible of endurance.

"Snakes!" he exclaimed genially. "This is *mighty* cheerful!" His strident twang seemed to cut wedges out of the foggy silence. "We look as though we had swallowed a peck of tenpenny nails, and the blamed things were sitting heavy on our stomachs! Come, let us be friendly. I ain't doing any trade in sore-headed bears. Wake up, sonny!" And he dug his melancholy neighbour in the ribs with an aggressive and outrageous thumb.

It was for all the world as though he had touched the spring that sets in motion the clock-work of a mechanical toy. The man's cap flew from his head, disclosing a scalp ill-covered with sparse hairs and scarred like his face, as he leaped to his feet with a scream, torn suddenly, as it were, from the depths of his self-absorbed abstraction. Casting quick, nervous glances over

his shoulder, he backed into the nearest corner, his hands clawing at the air, his eyes hunted, defiant, yet abject. His whole figure was instinct with terror—terror seeking impotently to defend itself against unnumbered enemies. His teeth were set, his gums were drawn back over them in two rigid white lines, a sort of snarling cry broke from him—a cry that seemed to be the expression of furious rage, pain, and agonisingly concentrated effort.

It all took place in a fraction of a second—as quickly as a man "jumps" when badly startled—and as quickly he recovered his balance, and pulled himself together. Then he cast a murderous glance at the American, who at that moment presented a picture of petrified astonishment, let fly a venomous oath at him, and slammed out of the room in a towering rage.

"Gorameroy!" ejaculated the American, limply. "I want a drink. Who'll join me?" But no one responded to his invitation.

That was the occasion of my first meeting with Timothy O'Hara; but as I subsequently travelled half across the world in his company, was admitted to his friendship, and heard him relate his experiences, not once but many times, I am able to supply the curious with the key to his extraordinary behaviour that evening. I regret that it is impossible to give his story in his own words, for he told it graphically and with force, but unfortunately his very proper indignation invariably got the better of his dis-

cretion, with the result that he frequently waxed blasphemous in the course of his narrative, and at times was rendered altogether inarticulate by rage. I flatter myself, however, that the version which I now offer to the reader is faithful and accurate in all essential details; and my own intimate knowledge of that gentle race called Mûruts, at whose hands O'Hara fared so evilly, has helped me to fill in such blanks as may have existed in the tale as it originally reached me.

Some years ago there was a man in North Borneo, whose name does not matter,—a man who had the itch of travel in him, and loved untrodden places for their own sake. He undertook to explore the interior of the No Man's Land which the Chartered Company euphemistically describes as its "property." He made his way inland from the western coast, and little more was heard of him for several months. At the end of that time a haze of disquieting rumours, as palpable as the used-up fever-laden wind that blows eternally from the interior, reached the little squalid stations on the seashore, and shortly afterwards the body of the explorer, terribly mangled and mutilated, was sluiced down - country by a freshet, and brought up on a sand-spit near the mouth of a river on the east coast. Here it was discovered by a couple of white men, who with the aid of a handful of unwilling natives buried it with becoming

state, since it was the only thing with a European father and mother which had ever travelled across the centre of North Borneo from sea to sea since the beginning of time.

In life the explorer had been noted for his beard, a great yellow cascade of hair which fell down his breast from his lip to his waist, and when his corpse was found this ornament was missing. The Chartered Company, whose business it is to pay dividends under adverse circumstances, does not profess to be a philanthropical institution, and cannot spend its hard-squeezed revenues upon putting the fear of death into people who have made too free with the lives of white folk, as is the practice in other parts of Asia. Therefore no steps were taken by the local administration to punish the Mûruts of the interior who had amused themselves by putting the explorer to an ugly death; but the knowledge that the murdered man's beard had been shorn from his chin by some truculent savage, and was even then ornamenting the knife-handle of a Mûrut chief in the heart of the island, rankled in the minds of the white men on the spot. The wise and prudent members of the community talked a great deal, said roundly that the thing was a shame and an abomination, and took care to let their discretion carry them no further than the spoken word. The young and foolish did not say so much, but the recovery of that wisp of hair became to many of them a tremendous ambition,

a dream, something that made even existence in North Borneo tolerable while it presented itself to their imaginations as a feat possible of accomplishment. With a few this dream became an *idée fixe*, an object in a life that otherwise were unendurable, and it may even have saved a few from the folly of immediate suicide. The quest would be the most hazardous conceivable, a fitting enterprise for men rendered desperate by the circumstances into the midst of which fate had thrust them; and a man might well feel that there was more satisfaction to be found in throwing away his life in an attempt to cleanse the stained honour of his breed than in bathetically blowing out his brains. The former was a romantic, nay, a glorious, venture; the latter earns a very general contempt, is even branded as an act of cowardice, and cowardice is the one sin of which the men of the outskirts fear to be accused.

Sitting at home in England, with pleasant things to distract the mind all about you, and with nothing at hand more dangerous than a motor-car, all this pother concerning the hairs off a dead man's chin may appeal to you as something absurdly sentimental and irrational; but try for the moment to place yourself in the position of an isolated white man at an out-station of North Borneo. Picture to yourself a tumble-down thatched bungalow standing on a roughly cleared hill, with four Chinese shops and a dilapidated police-station squatting on the bank

of a black, creeping river. Rub in a smudge of blue-green forest, shutting you up on flanks, front, and rear. Fill that forest with scattered huts, wherein squalid natives live the lives of beasts—natives whose language you do not know, whose ideas you do not understand, who make their presence felt only by means of savage howls raised by them in their drunken orgies,—natives whose hatred of you can only be kept from active expression by the fear which your armed readiness may inspire. Add to this merciless heat, faint exhausted air, an occasional bout of the black fever of the country, and not enough of work to preserve your mind from rust. Remember that the men who are doomed to live in these places get no sport, have no recreations, no companionship; that the long, empty, suffocating days trail by one by one, bringing no hope of change, and that the only communication with the outer world is kept up fitfully by certain dingy steam-tramps which are always behind time, and which may, or may not, arrive once a month. Can you wonder that amid such surroundings men wax melancholy, that they take to brooding over all manner of trivial things in a fashion which is not quite sane, and that the knowledge that their continued existence is dependent upon the wholesome awe in which white folk are held sometimes gets upon their nerves, and makes them feverishly anxious to vindicate the honour of their race? When you have let the full meaning of these things sink

into your minds, you will begin to understand why so much excitement prevailed in North Borneo concerning the reported ownership of the deceased explorer's beard.

Timothy O'Hara and Harold Bateman had lived lives such as those which I have described for half-a-dozen years or more. They had had ample leisure in which to turn the matter of the explorer's beard over and over in their minds, till the thought of it had bred something like fanaticism, a kind of still, white-hot rage, within them. It chanced that their leave of absence fell due upon one and the same day. It followed that they put their heads together and decided to start upon a private raid of their own into the interior of the Mûrut country, with a view to redeeming the trophy. It also followed that they made their preparations with the utmost secrecy, and that they enlisted a dozen villainous little Dyaks from Sarawak to act as their punitive force. The whole thing was highly improper and very illegal, but it promised adventurous experiences, and both Bateman and O'Hara were young and not over wise. Also, it must be urged in extenuation of their conduct that they had the effects of some six years' crushing monotony to work off, that they had learned to regard the Mûruts of the interior as their natural enemies, and that the ugliness and the deadly solitude of their existence had rendered them savage, just as the tamest beast becomes wild and ferocious when it finds it-

self held in the painful grip of a trap.

I am in nowise concerned to justify their doings: my part is to record them. O'Hara and Bateman vanished one day from the last outpost of quasi-civilisation, having given out that they were off up-country in search of big game—which was a fact. Their little expedition slipped into the forest, and the wilderness swallowed it. When once they had pushed out into the unknown interior they were gone past power of recall,—were lost as completely as a needle in a ten-acre hay-field; and they breathed more freely because they had escaped from the narrow zone wherein the law of the white man runs, and need guide themselves for the future merely by the dictates of their own rudimentary notions of right and wrong.

They had a pretty awful time of it, so far as I can gather; for the current of the rivers, which crept towards them, black and oily, from the upper country, was dead against them, and the rapids soon caused them to abandon their boats. Then they tramped it, trudging with dogged perseverance up and down the hills, clambering painfully up sheer ascents, slipping down the steep pitches on the other side, splashing and labouring through the swamps betwixt hill and hill, or wading waist-deep across wastes of rank *ldlang*-grass, from the green surface of which the refracted heat smote them under their hat-brims with the force of blows. Aching in every limb, half-blinded by the sweat

that trickled into their eyes, flayed by the sun, mired to the ears in the morasses, torn by thorn-thickets, devoured by tree-leeches, stung by all manner of jungle-insects, and oppressed by the weight of self-imposed effort that pride forbade them to abandon, they struggled forward persistently, fiercely, growing more savage and more vindictive at every painful step. The golden fleece of beard, which was the object of their quest, became an oriflamme, in the wake of which they floundered eternally through the inferno of an endless fight. Their determination to recover it became a madness, a possession; it filled their minds to the exclusion of aught else, nerved them to fresh endeavour, spurred them out of their weariness, and would not suffer them to rest. But the bitterness of their travail incensed them mightily against the Mûrut folk, whose lack of reverence for white men had imposed so tremendous a task upon these self-appointed champions of their race; and as they sat over their unpalatable meals when the day's toil was ended, they talked together in blood-thirsty fashion of the vengeance they would wreak, and the punishment they would exact from the tribe which was discovered to be in possession of the object of their search.

One feature of their march was that prudence forbade a halt. The Mûrut of North Borneo is a person of mean understanding, who requires time wherein to set his slow intellect in motion. He is a dipsomaniac, a homicide by

training and predilection, and he has a passion for collecting other people's skulls, which is as unscrupulous and as fanatical as that of the modern philatelist. Whenever he encounters a stranger he immediately falls to coveting that stranger's skull; but as he is a creature of poor courage, it is essential to his comfort that he should win possession of it only by means that will not endanger his own skin. The question as to how such means may be contrived presents a difficult problem for his solution, and it takes his groping mind from two to three days in which to hit upon a workable plan. The explorer, as Bateman and O'Hara were aware, lost his life because, overcome by fatigue, he allowed himself to commit the mistake of spending more than a single night under a hospitable Mûrut roof-tree, and so gave time to his hosts to plot his destruction. Had he only held steadily upon his way, all might have been well with him: for in a country where every village is at enmity with its neighbours, a short march would have carried him into a stranger's land, which he should have been able to quit in its turn ere the schemes for his immolation hatched therein had had leisure in which to ripen. O'Hara and Bateman, therefore, no matter how worn out they might be by that everlasting, clambering tramp across that cruel huddle of hill-caps, were rowelled by necessity into pushing forward, and still forward, as surely as the day dawned. They felt much as the urchin Jo must have done

when all men combined to keep him "moving on"; and as they were less meek than he, their hatred of the Mûrut people, who here acted towards them the part of vigilant constables, increased and multiplied exceedingly.

Often the filth and squalor of the long airless huts—each one of which accommodated a whole village community in its dark interior, all the pigs and fowls of the place beneath its flooring, and as many blackened human skulls as could find hanging-space along its roof-beams—sickened them, and drove them forth to camp in the jungle. Here there were only wild beasts,—self-respecting and on the whole cleanly beasts, which compared very favourably with the less attractive animals in the village-huts,—but a vigilant guard had to be maintained against possible surprise, and this, after a heart-breaking tramp, was hard alike upon white men and Dyaks.

The raiders had pitched their camp in such a place one evening, and as the party lacked meat, and the pigeons could be heard cooing in the tree-tops close at hand, O'Hara took his fowling-piece and strolled off alone into the forest, with the intention of shooting a few birds for the pot. The jungle was very dense in this part of the country, so dense indeed that a man was powerless to see in any direction for a distance of more than a dozen yards; but the pigeons were plentiful, and as they fluttered from tree to tree O'Hara walked after them without realising in

the least how far he was straying from his starting-point. At last the fast-failing light arrested his attention, and as he stooped to pick up the last pigeon, the search for which among the brambles had occupied more time than he had fancied, it suddenly struck him that he ought to be returning to the camp, while a doubt as to its exact direction assailed him. He was in the very act of straightening himself again with a view to looking about him for some indication of the path by which he had come, when a slight crackle in the underwood smote upon his ear. He remained very still, stooping forward as he was, holding his breath, and listening intently. It flashed through his mind that the sound might have been made by one of the Dyaks, who perhaps had come out of the camp in search of him, and he waited the repetition of the snapping noise with eagerness, hoping that it would tell him whether it were caused by man or beast. As he stood thus for an instant with bowed shoulders, the crackle came again, louder, crisper, and much nearer than before, and at the same moment, before he had time to change his attitude or to realise that danger threatened him, something smote him heavily in the back, bringing him prone to the earth with a grunt. The concussion was caused by some yielding substance, that yet was quick and warm, and the litter of dead leaves and the tangle of underwood combined to break his fall. He was not hurt, there-

fore, though the breath was knocked out of him, and that unseen something, which tumbled and writhed upon his back, pinned him to the ground. He skewed his head round, trying to see what had assailed him, and immediately a diabolical face peeped over his shoulder an inch or two above it. He only saw it, as it were, in a flash, but the sight was one which, he was accustomed to say, he would never forget. In after-years it was wont to recur to him in dreams, and as surely as it came it woke him with a scream. It was a savage face, brown yet pallid, grimed with dirt and wood-ashes, with a narrow retreating forehead, a bestial prognathous snout, and a tiny twitching chin. The little black eyes, fierce and excited, were ringed about by angry red sores, for the eyelashes had been plucked out. The eyebrows also had been similarly removed, but from the upper lip a few coarse wires sprouted uncleanly. The face was split in twain by a set of uneven teeth, pointed like those of a wild cat, and tightly clenched, while above and below them the gums snarled rigidly, bearing witness to the physical effort which their owner was making. The scalp was divided into even halves by a broad parting, on either side of which there rose a tangle of dirty, ill-kept hair, that was drawn back into a chignon which gave the creature a curious sexless aspect. All these things O'Hara noted in the fraction of a second,

and as the horror bred of them set him heaving and fighting as well as his cramped position made possible, a sharp knee-cap was driven into the back of his neck, and his head fell forward with a concussion that blinded him. For a moment he lay still and inert, and in that moment he was conscious of little deft hands, that flew this way and that, over, under, and around his limbs, and of the pressure of narrow withes, drawn suddenly taut, that ate into his flesh. Up to this time the whole affair had been transacted in a dead, unnatural silence that somehow gave to it the strangeness and unreality of a nightmare; but now, as O'Hara lay prostrate with his face buried in the under-wood, the evensong of the forest insects, which rings through the jungle during the gloaming hour, was suddenly interrupted by an outbreak of queer sounds — by gurgling, jerky speech intermixed with shrill squeakings and whistlings, and by the clicking cackle which stands the Mûrut folk instead of laughter. Yet even now the voices of his captors were subdued and hushed, as though unwilling to be overheard, and O'Hara, understanding that the Mûruts feared to be interrupted by their victim's friends, made shift to raise a shout, albeit the green stuff forced its way into his mouth and choked his utterance.

Immediately the little nimble hands were busy, clutching him afresh, while the tones of those inhuman voices shrilled

and gurgled and clicked more excitedly than before. O'Hara was heaved and tugged, first one way, then another, until finally his body was rolled over on to its back, falling with a dull bump. He shouted once more, putting all the strength that was in him into the yell, and the nearest Mûrut promptly stamped on his mouth with his horny heel. O'Hara bit viciously at the thing, but his teeth could make no impression upon its leathery under-surface, and before he could shout again he found himself gagged with a piece of wood, which was bound in its place by a couple of withes. Despair seized him then, and for a moment or two he lay still, with the manhood knocked fairly out of him by a crushing consciousness of impotence, while the gabble of squeak, and whistle, and grunt, still hushed cautiously, broke out more discordantly than ever.

The withes about his limbs bound O'Hara so cripplingly that only his neck was free to move, but presently, craning it upward, he caught sight of his persecutors for the first time. They formed a squalid group of little, half-starved, wizened creatures, not much larger than most European children of fourteen, but with brutal faces that seemed to bear the weight of whole centuries of care and of animal self-indulgence. They were naked, save for their foul loin-clouts; they were abominably dirty, and their skins were smothered in leprous-looking ringworm; they had not an eyelash or an eyebrow among

them, for the hairs had been plucked out by the root, but their scalps were covered by frowzy growths, gathered into loathsome chignons on the napes of their necks. Every man was armed with one or more spears, and from the waist of each a long knife depended, sheathed in a wooden scabbard hung with tufts of hair. One of them—the man whose face O'Hara had caught a glimpse of above his shoulder—flourished his sheathed knife insistently in his captive's face with grotesque gesticulations, and O'Hara shuddered every time that the disgusting tassels that bedecked the scabbard swept his cheek. The fading daylight was very dim now, enabling O'Hara to see only the *form* of the things by which he was surrounded: *colour* had ceased to have any meaning in those gloomy forest aisles. The grinning savage prancing and gibbering around him, and brandishing that sheathed weapon with its revolting trophies, puzzled him. If he meant murder, why did he not draw his blade? In the depth of his misery the inconsequence of this war-dance furnished O'Hara with an additional torture.

Presently two of the Mûruts came suddenly within his field of vision bearing a long green pole. This they proceeded to thrust between O'Hara's flesh and the withes that were entwined about him, and when this had been accomplished, the whole party set their shoulders under the extremities of the pole and lifted their prisoner clear from the ground. Then

they bore him off at a sort of jog-trot.

The thongs, tightened fearfully by the pressure thus put upon them, pinched and bruised him pitilessly; his head, lacking all support, hung down in an attitude of dislocation, wagging this way and that at every jolt; the blood surged into his brain, causing a horrible vertigo, and seeming to thrust his eyes almost out of their sockets; he thought that he could *feel* his limbs swelling above the biting grip of the withes, and an irresistible nausea seized him. Maddening cramps tied knots in his every muscle, and had his journey been of long duration Timothy O'Hara would never have reached its end alive. Very soon, however, the decreased pace, and the shrill whistling sounds which came from the noses of his Mûrut bearers, told him that the party was ascending a hill—for these strange folk do not pant like ordinary people, and the uncanny noise was familiar to O'Hara from many a toilsome march in the company of native porters. Presently, too, between the straining legs of the leading files O'Hara caught a flying glimpse of distant fire, and that, he knew, betokened the neighbourhood of a village.

A few minutes later, just as he thought that he was about to lose consciousness, the village was reached—a long, narrow hut, raised on piles, and with a door at either end, from the thresholds of which crazy ladder-ways led to the ground. Up the nearest of these rude

staircases the Mûruts struggled with their burden, banging his head roughly against each untrimmed rung, and threw it down on the bamboo flooring with a chorus of grunts. For a moment there was silence, while the entire community gathered round the white man, staring at him eagerly with a kind of ferocious curiosity. Then with one accord all the men, women, and children present set up a diabolical chorus of whoopings and yellings. They seemed to give themselves over to a veritable insanity of noise. Some, squatting on their heels, supporting the weight of their bodies on arms thrust well behind them, tilted their chins to the roof and howled like maniacs. Others, standing erect, opened their mouths to their full extent, and emitted a series of shrill, blood-curdling bellows. Others, again, shut their eyes, threw their arms aloft, and concentrating every available atom of energy in the effort, screamed till their voices broke. The ear-piercing din sounded as though all the devils in hell had of a sudden broken loose. Heard from afar, the savage triumph, the diabolical delight that found in it their fitting expression, might well have made the blood run cold in the veins of the bravest; but heard close at hand by the solitary white man whose capture had evoked that hideous outcry, and who knew himself to be utterly at the mercy of these fiends, it was almost enough to unship his reason. O'Hara told me that

from that moment he forgot the pain which his bonds occasioned him, forgot even his desire for escape, and was filled with a tremendous longing to be put out of his agony—to be set free by death from this unspeakable inferno. His mind, he said, was working with surprising activity, and “as though it belonged to somebody else.” In a series of flashes he began to recall all that he had ever heard of the manners and customs of the Mûruts, of the strange uses to which they put their prisoners, and all the while he was possessed by a kind of restlessness that made him eager for them to do *something*—no matter of how awful a character—that would put a period to his unendurable suspense.

Meanwhile the Mûruts were enjoying themselves thoroughly. Large earthenware jars, each sufficiently large to drown a baby with comfort, were already standing round the enclosed verandah which formed the common-room of the village, on to which each family cubicle opened, and to these jars the Mûruts—men, women, and children—repeatedly addressed themselves, squatting by them, and sucking up through long bamboo tubes the abominable liquor which filled them. Each toper, as he quitted the jar, fell to howling with redoubled energy, and as more and more of the fiery stuff was consumed, their cries became more savage, more inarticulate, and more diabolical.

Half-a-dozen men, however, were apparently busy in the

performance of some task on a spot just behind O'Hara's head, for though they frequently paid visits of ceremony to the liquor-jars, they always staggered back to the same part of the room when their draughts were ended, and there fell to hacking and hammering at wood with renewed energy. O'Hara was convinced that they were employed in constructing some infernal instrument of torture; and the impossibility of ascertaining its nature was maddening, and set his imagination picturing every abominable contrivance for the infliction of anguish of which he had ever heard or read. And all the while the hideous orgies for which his capture was the pretext were waxing more fast and furious.

Suddenly the hidden group behind him set up a shrill cat-call, and at the sound every Mûrut in sight leaped to his or her feet, and danced frantically with hideous outcry and maniacal laughter. A moment later a rattan rope whined as it was pulled over the main beam of the roof with something heavy at its end, and as the slack of the cord was made fast to the wall-post opposite to him, O'Hara was aware of some large object, suspended in mid-air, swinging out into the middle of the room immediately above him. This, as he craned his neck up at it, struggling to see it more clearly in the uncertain torch-light, was presently revealed as a big cage, an uneven square in shape, the bars of which were some six inches apart,

saving on one side where a wide gap was left. He had barely had time to make this discovery when a mob of Mûrut men and women rushed at him, cut the bonds that bound him, and mauling him mercilessly, lifted him up, and literally threw him into the opening formed by the gap. The cage rocked crazily, while the Mûruts yelled their delight, and two of their number proceeded hastily to patch up the gap with cross-pieces of wood. Then the whole crowd drew away a little, though the hubbub never slackened, and O'Hara set his teeth to smother the groans which the pain of the removed bonds nearly wrung from him. For the time fear and all other emotions were forgotten in the acuteness of the agony which he endured, for as the blood began to flow freely once more, every inch of his body seemed to have been transformed into so many raging teeth. His extremities felt soft and flabby, — cold, too, like jellies, — but O'Hara was by nature a very strong man, and at the time of his capture he had been in the pink of condition. In an incredibly short while, therefore, the pain subsided, and he began to regain the use of his cramped limbs.

He was first made aware of his recovered activity by the alacrity with which he bounded into the centre of the cage in obedience to a sharp prick in the back. He tried to rise to his feet, and his head came into stunning contact with the roof; then, in a crouching attitude, he turned in the direction

whence the attack had reached him. What he saw filled him with horror. The leader of the Mûruts who had captured him, his eyes bloodshot with drink, was staggering about in front of him with grotesque posturings, waving his knife in one hand and its wooden sheath in the other. It was the former evidently that had administered that painful prod to O'Hara's back, but it was the latter which chained the white man's attention even in that moment of whirling emotions, for from its base depended a long shaggy wisp of sodden yellow hair—the golden fleece of which O'Hara and Bateman were in search. In a flash the savage saw that his victim had recognised the trophy to which he had already been at some pains to direct his attention, and the assembled Mûruts gave unmistakable tokens that they all grasped the picturesqueness of the situation. They yelled and howled and bayed more frantically than ever; some of them rolled upon the floor, their limbs and faces contorted by paroxysms of savage merriment, while others staggered about, smiting their fellows on their bare shoulders, squeaking like bats, and clucking like demoralised clockwork. A second prod with a sharp point made O'Hara shy across his narrow cage like a fly-bitten horse, and before he could recover his balance a score of delicately handled weapons inflicted light wounds all over his face and hands. As each knife touched him its owner threw up his head and repeated some formula

in a shrill sing-song, no word of which was intelligible to O'Hara save only the name of Kina-Balu—the great mountain which dominates North Borneo, and is believed by the natives to be the eternal resting-place of the spirits which have quitted the life of earth.

Then, for the first time, O'Hara understood what was happening to him. He had often heard of the ceremony known to the wild Mûruts as a *bângun*, which has for its object the maintenance of communication between the living and the dead. He had even seen a pig hung up, as he was now hanging, while the tamer Mûruts prodded it to death very carefully and slowly, charging it the while with messages for the spirits of the departed, and he remembered how the abominable cruelty of the proceeding had turned him sick, and had set him longing to interfere with native religious customs in defiance of the prudent Government which he served. Now he was himself to be done to death by inches, just as the pig had died, and he knew that men had spoken truly when they had explained to him that the unfortunate quadruped was only substituted for a nobler victim as a concession to European prejudice, to the great discontent of the tame Mûruts.

These thoughts rushed through his mind with the speed of lightning, and all the while it seemed to him that every particle of his mental forces was concentrated upon a single object—the task of defending himself against a

crowd of persecutors. Crouching in the centre of the cage, snarling like a cat, with his eyes bursting from their sockets, his every limb braced for a leap in any direction, his hands scrabbling at the air to ward off the stabs, he faced from side to side, his breath coming in quick, noisy pants. Every second one or another of the points that assailed him made him turn about with a cry of rage, and immediately his exposed back was prodded by every Mûrut within reach. Suddenly he heard his own voice raised in awful curses and blasphemies, and the familiar tones of his mother-tongue smote him with surprise. He had little consciousness of pain as pain, only the necessity of warding off the points of his enemies presented itself to him as something that must be accomplished at all costs, and each separate failure enraged him. He bounded about his cage with an energy and an agility that astonished him, and the rocking of his prison seemed to keep time with the lilting of his thumping heartbeats. More than once he fell, and his face and scalp were prodded terribly ere he could regain his feet; often he ward off a thrust with his bare hands. But of the wounds which he thus received he was hardly conscious; his mind was in a species of delirium of rage, and all the time he was torn with a fury of indignation because he, a white man, was being treated in this dishonouring fashion by a pack of despicable Mûruts! But he received no serious in-

jury; for the Mûruts, who, like the "modern major-general," were "teeming with a lot of news" for their dead relations, were anxious to keep the life in him as long as might be, and, in spite of their intoxication, prodded him with shrewdness and caution. How long it all lasted O'Hara never knew with certainty; but it was the exhaustion caused by loss of breath, and by the wild leaping of that bursting heart of his, that caused him presently to sink on the floor of his cage in a swoon.

Then the Mûruts, finding that he did not answer to their stabs, drew off and gathered eagerly around the liquor-jars. The killing would come soon after the dawn—as soon, in fact, as their overnight orgies made possible—when the prisoner would be set to run the gantlet, and would be hacked to pieces after one final, delicious *bângun*. It was essential, therefore, that enough strength should be left in him to enable him to show good sport, and in the meantime their villainous home-made spirits would bring that measure of happiness which comes to the Mûrut from being suffered, for a little space, to forget the fact of his own repulsive existence. Accordingly, with noisy hospitality, each man tried to make his neighbours drink to greater excess than himself, and all proved willing victims. With hoots and squeals of laughter, little children were torn from their mothers' breasts and given to suck at the bamboo pipes, their ensuing intoxication being

watched with huge merriment by men and women alike. The shouts raised by the revellers became more and more shaky, less and less articulate; over and over again the groups around the jars broke up, while their members crawled away, to lie about in death-like stupors, from which they roused themselves only to vomit and drink anew.

Long before this stage of the proceedings had been reached O'Hara had recovered his senses, but prudence bade him lie as still as a mouse. Once or twice a drunken Mûrut lurched on to his feet and made a pass or two at him, and now and again he was prodded painfully, but, putting forth all the self-control at his command, he gave no sign of life. At last every Mûrut in the place was sunken in abominable torpor, excepting only the chief, from whose knife-scabbard hung the tuft which had once ornamented the chin of the explorer. His little red eyes were fixed in a drunken glare upon O'Hara, and the latter watched them with a fascination of dread through his half-closed lids. Over and over again the Mûrut crawled to the nearest liquor-jar, and sucked up the dregs with a horrible sibilant gurgling, and at times he even staggered to his feet, muttering and mumbling over his tiny, busy chin, waving his weapon uncertainly, ere he subsided in a limp heap upon the floor. On each occasion he gave more evident tokens of drowsiness, and at last his blinking eyes were covered by their lashless lids,

At the same moment a gentle gnawing sound, which had been attracting O'Hara's attention for some minutes, though he had not dared to move by so much as a finger's breadth to discover its cause, ceased abruptly. Then the faintest ghost of a whisper came to his ears from below his cage, and moving with the greatest caution, and peering down through the uncertain light, he saw that a hole had been made by sawing away two of the laths which formed the flooring. In the black hole immediately beneath him the faces of two of his own Dyaks were framed, and even as he looked one of them hoisted himself into the hut, and began deftly to remove the bars of the cage, moving as noiselessly as a shadow. The whole thing was done so silently, and O'Hara's own mind was so racked by the emotions which his recent experiences had held for him, that he was at first persuaded that what he saw, or rather fancied he saw, was merely the figment conjured up for his torture by a delirium which possessed him. He felt that if he suffered himself to believe in this mocking delusion even for an instant the disappointment of discovering its utter unreality would drive him mad. He was already spent with misery, physical and mental; he was consciously holding himself in leash to prevent the commission of some inane extravagance; he was seized with an unreasoning desire to scream. He fought with himself—a self that was

unfamiliar to him, although its identity was never in doubt—as he might have fought with a stranger; he told himself that his senses were playing cruel pranks upon him, and that nothing should induce him to be deceived by them; and all the while hope, mad, wild, hysterical hope, was surging up in his heart, shaking him like an aspen, wringing unaccustomed tears from his eyes, and tearing his breast with noiseless sobs.

As he lay inert, and utterly wretched, unable to bear up manfully under this new wanton torture of the mind, the ghost of the second Dyak clambered skilfully out of the darkness below the hut-floor and joined his fellow, who had already made a wide gap in the side of the cage. Then the two of them seized O'Hara, and with the same strange absence of sound, lifted him bodily out of the prison, and through the hole in the flooring on to the earth below. Their grip upon his lacerated flesh hurt him acutely; but the very pain was welcome, for did it not prove the reality of his deliverers? What he experienced of relief and gratitude O'Hara could never tell us, for all he remembers is that, gone suddenly weak and plaintive as a child, he clung to the little Dyaks, sobbing broken-heartedly, and weeping on their shoulders without restraint or decency, in an utter *abandon* of self-pity. Also he recalls dimly that centuries later he found himself standing in Bateman's camp, with his people gather-

ing about him, and that of a sudden he was made aware that he was mother-naked. After that, so he avers, all is a blank.

The closing incidents of the story were related to me by Bateman one evening when I chanced to forgather with him in an up-country outpost in Borneo. We had been talking far into the night, and our *solitude à deux* and the lateness of the hour combined to thaw his usual taciturnity, and to unlock his shy confidence. Therefore I was put in possession of a secret which until then, I believe, had been closely kept.

"It was an awful night," he said, "that upon which poor O'Hara was missing. The Dyaks had gone out in couples all over the place to try to pick up his trail; but I remained in the camp, for though there was a little moon, it was too dark for a white man's eyes to be of any good. What with the inactivity and my fears for O'Hara I was as 'jumpy' as you make it; and as the Dyaks began to drop in, two at a time, each couple bringing their tale of failure, I worked myself up into such a state of depression and misery that I thought I must be going mad. Just about three o'clock in the morning the last brace of Dyaks turned up, and I was all of a shake when I saw that they had poor O'Hara with them. He broke loose from them and stumbled into the centre of the camp, stark naked, and pecked almost to bits by those infernal Mûrut

knives; but the wounds were not over-deep, and the blood was caking over most of them. He was an awful sight, and I was for tending his hurts without delay; but he pushed me roughly aside, and I saw that his eyes were blazing with madness. He stood there in the midst of us all, throwing his arms above his head, cursing in English and in the vernacular, and gesticulating wildly. The Dyaks edged away from him, and I could see that his condition funk'd them mortally. I tried again and again to speak to him and calm him, but he would not listen to a word I said, and for full five minutes he stood there raving and ranting, now and again pacing frenziedly from side to side, pouring out a torrent of invective mixed with muddled orders. One of the Dyaks brought him a pair of trousers, and after looking at them as though he had never seen such things before, he put them on, and stood for a second or two staring wildly round him. Then he made a bee-line for a rifle, loaded it, and slung a bandolier across his naked shoulders, and before I could stay him he was marching out of the camp with the whole crowd of Dyaks at his heels.

"I could only follow. I had no fancy for being left alone in that wilderness, more especially just then, and one of the Dyaks told me that he was leading them back to the Mûrut village. You see I only speak Malay, and as O'Hara had been talking Dyak I had not been able to follow his ravings. What-

ever lingo he jabbered, however, it was as plain as a pikestaff that the fellow was mad as a hatter; but I had to stop explaining this to him, for he threatened to shoot me, and the Dyaks would not listen. They clearly thought that he was possessed by a devil, and they would have gone to hell at his bidding while their fear of him was upon them.

"And his madness made him cunning too, for he stalked the Mûrut den awfully neatly, and just as the dawn was breaking we found ourselves posted in the jungle within a few yards of the two doors, which were the only means of entrance or exit for the poor devils in the hut.

"Then O'Hara leaped out of his hiding-place and began yelling like the maniac he was, and in an instant the whole of that long hut was humming like a disturbed beehive. Three or four squalid creatures showed themselves at the doorway nearest O'Hara, and he greeted them with half the contents of his magazine, and shrieked with laughter as they toppled on to the ground, rolling over and over in their death-agony. There was such a wailing and crying set up by the other inhabitants of the hut as you never heard in all your life,—it was just Despair made vocal,—the sort of outcry that a huge menagerie of wild animals might make when they saw flames lapping at their very cages, and above it all I could hear O'Hara's demoniac laughter ringing with savage delight, and the war-whoops of

those little devils of Dyaks, whose blood was fairly up now. The trapped wretches in the hut made a stampede for the farther door: we could hear them scuffling and fighting with one another for the foremost places. They thought that safety lay in that direction; but the Dyaks were ready for them, and the bullets from their Winchesters drove clean through three and four of the squirming creatures at a time, and in a moment that doorway too, and the ground about the ladder foot, were a shambles.

"After that for a space there was a kind of awful lull within the hut, though without O'Hara and his Dyaks capered and yelled. Then the noise which our folk were making was drowned by a series of the most heart-breaking shrieks you ever heard or dreamed of, and immediately a second rush was made simultaneously at each door. The early morning light was getting stronger now, and I remember noting how incongruously peaceful and serene it seemed. Part of the hut near our end had caught fire somehow, and there was a lot of smoke which hung low about the doorway. Through this I saw the crowd of Mûruts struggle in that final rush, and my blood went cold when I understood what they were doing. Every man had a woman or a child held tightly in his arms,—held in front of him as a buckler,—and it was from these poor devils that those awful screams were coming. I jumped in front of the Dyaks and yelled to them in

Malay to hold their fire; but O'Hara thrust me aside, and *shooed* the Dyaks on with shouts and curses and peals of laughter, slapping his palm on his gun-stock, and capering with delight and excitement. The Dyaks took no sort of heed of me, and the volleys met the Mûruts like a wall of lead.

"I had slipped and fallen when O'Hara pushed me, and as I clambered on to my feet again I saw the mob of savages fall together and crumple up, for all the world as paper crumples when burned suddenly. Most of them fell back into the dark interior of the hut, writhing in convulsions above the litter of dead; but one or two pitched forward headlong to the ground, and I saw a little brown baby, which had escaped unharmed, crawling about over the corpses, and squeaking like a wounded rabbit. I ran forward to save it, but a Dyak was too quick for me, and before I could get near it he had thrown himself upon it, and . . . *ugh!*

"The Mûruts began cutting their way through the flooring then, and trying to bolt into the jungle. One or two of them got away, I think, and this threw O'Hara into such a passion of fury that I half expected to see him kill some of the Dyaks. He tore round to the side of the hut, and I saw him brain one Mûrut as he made a rush from under the low floor. One end of the building was in roaring flames by this time, and half-a-dozen of the Dyaks had gone in at the other end and were bolting

the wretched creatures from their hiding-places, just as ferrets bolt rabbits from their burrows, while O'Hara and the other Dyaks waited for them outside. They hardly missed one of them, sparing neither age nor sex, though I ran from one to the other like a madman, trying to prevent them. It was awful, . . . awful, and I was fairly blubbering with the horror of it, and with the consciousness of my own impotence. I was regularly broken up by it, and I remember at the last sitting down upon a log, burying my face in my hands, and crying like a child.

"The thing seemed to be over by then: there was no more bolting, and the Dyaks were beginning to clear out of the hut as the flames gained ground and made the place too hot for them. But, at the last, there came a terrific yell from the very heart of the fire, and a single Mûrut leaped out of the smoke. He was stark naked, for his loin-clout had been burned to tinder; he was blackened by the smoke, and his long hair was afire and waving behind him. His mouth was wide, and the cries that came from it went through and through my head, running up and up the scale till they hit upon a note whose shrillness agonised you. Surrounded by the flames, he looked like a devil in the heart of the pit. In one scorched arm he brandished a long knife, the blade of which was red with the glare of the flames, and in the other was the sheath, blazing at one end, and decked at the other

by a great tuft of yellow hair that was smouldering damply.

"As soon as he saw him O'Hara raised a terrible cry and threw himself at him. The two men grappled and fell, the knife and scabbard escaping from the Mûrut's grasp and pitching straight into the heart of the fire. The struggle lasted for nearly a minute, O'Hara and his enemy rolling over and over one another, breathing heavily, but making no other sound. Then something happened—I don't know clearly what—but the Mûrut's head dropped, and O'Hara rose up from his dead body, moving very stiffly. He stood for a minute or so, looking round him in a dazed fashion, until at last his eyes caught mine. Then he staggered towards me, reeling like a tipsy man.

"'Mother of Heaven!' he said thickly, 'what have I done? What *have* I done?'

"He stared round him at the little brown corpses, doubled up in dislocated and contorted attitudes, and his eyes were troubled.

"'God forgive me!' he muttered. 'God forgive me!'

"Then he spun about on his heel, his hands outstretched above his head, his fingers clutching at the air, a thin foam forming on his lips, and

before I could reach him he had toppled over in a limp heap upon the ground.

"I had an awful business getting O'Hara down country. He was as mad as a March hare for three weeks. But the Dyaks worked like bricks—albeit I could not bear the sight of them—and the currents of the rivers were in our favour when we reached navigable water. I know that O'Hara was mad that morning,—no white man could have acted as he did unless he had been insane,—and he always swears that he has no recollection of anything that occurred after the Dyaks rescued him. I hope it may be so, but I am not certain. He is a changed man anyway, as nervous and 'jumpy' as you make it, and I know that he is always brooding over that up-country trip of ours."

"Yes," I assented, "and he is constantly telling the first part of the story to every chance soul he meets."

"Exactly," said Bateman. "That is what makes me doubt the completeness of his oblivion concerning what followed. You see his sufferings at the hands of the Mûruts supply the only conceivable excuse for his share in that morning's butchery, '*et qui s'excuse s'accuse*.' What do you think?"

DE WET.

NOT the least extraordinary result of the war in South Africa has been the quantity of literature to which it has given birth. The bulk of this literature has described the operations from the British standpoint. This was only to be expected, since the Boers are essentially a pastoral people, without art or literature, and apparently devoid of that temperament which is a fertile bed for intellectual progression. But considering the descent of which they are so proud, it is a curious trait in their national character that they have retained few of the refinements of their ancestors. Consequently such literature as voiced their view of the late struggle, which was given to the public before the termination of hostilities, came from the pens of aliens who had served for a time in their midst. For the most part this was of an ephemeral and worthless nature,—some of it so partisan and violent as to suggest the labour of the mercenary. One or two of the younger generation of Boers, town-bred by reason of the new-found wealth of the Republics, essayed when in exile or captivity to write the story of their experiences. At least one volume of this kind, admirable as far as it went, has appeared; but it was the exception, not the rule. With the termination of hostilities has come a new craze for war literature—a demand for the personal stories of the

leaders of this pastoral people, who, for the last three years, have presented to the world the anomaly of a tiny nation maintaining armed defiance to one of the Powers of the world.

If there has been one personality in connection with this unequal struggle which has appealed to the fancy of fanatics or the imagination of the ignorant, it has been that of Christiaan Rudolf De Wet, farmer of the district of Heilbron, member of the late Free State Volksraad, and ultimately Commandant-General of the Free State forces. Ever since the day when, by a stroke of unprecedented fortune, he embroiled a brigade of British cavalry outside Bloemfontein, this man has been the hero of that Continental section whose delight and recreation would appear to be the vilifying of this country; the idol of that misguided class who, self-instituted, are the friends of every country but their own. To him has been attributed in turn the constructive genius of a Napoleon, the personal valour of a Crauford, and the executive skill of a Moltke. Be it said that these estimates have been fed and furnished for the most part in the hysterical imaginations of classes whose enthusiasm is greater than their knowledge, and whose bias is superior to their powers of discrimination. But the fact remains that the figure of the ill-natured, dogged Heilbron farmer stands out in

the popular idea, both in this country and abroad, as the hero of the Boer campaign. This man has responded to the popular demand—he has written a book.¹

In dealing with this book, it would be as well to arrive at a truer estimate of the author as a soldier and a man than is to be found in the fancy-bred vapourings of a vicious Continental press, or the cheers of a sensation-seeking London mob.* It is not our intention to destroy this farmer idol; but with the knowledge of those who have opposed him in the field, and with the aid of his book, it is easy to demonstrate that his feet are clay. Considering his antecedents, De Wet has proved himself a very capable enemy of a peculiar type. The history of war is full of instances of the kind when the best men spring from obscurity to power, and the military history of the future will doubtless continue to produce such men when a national emergency has paralysed legitimate control.

The Heilbron farmer and Boer senator, who had taken the field at the beginning of the war as a common Burgher, was the man able to step into the breach, which followed the paralysis of legitimate control when Lord Roberts' army occupied the Orange Free State capital. He had gained some military success previous to this, and, what was of more value to him, military experience; yet it was not so much as a soldier that De Wet was of value to his country in its need,

but rather as a lever to work upon the action and cohesion of his countrymen. We have not complete evidence to prove that De Wet was an exceptionally brave man in the face of an enemy, though we have abundant proof of his moral courage,—in his particular case a far more valuable asset than mere indifference to bodily hurt. What he brought to the Free State commandoes was cohesion, energy, and a rough and ready discipline. His military aptitude, of which we have heard so much, in reality was small, but such little of it as there was was good. He had appreciated with the unerring skill of the hunter the value of mobility and the power of rifle-fire when adapted to a country peculiar in the advantages it gave for the employment of the combine. In this he was not singular: the majority of his fellow-Burghers had arrived at the same knowledge through the same source. But his self-reliance, his energy, his ability to inspire confidence and compel obedience, were the true causes of his success. We do not believe him to be possessed of a nice nature,—the reverse, even though in this respect his book may malign him, through the offices of his translator. But he was possessed of a dogged, desperate determination, which at once placed him above the level of his fellow-Burghers. His influence grew as disappointment brought out the more brutal side of his character. It was

¹ *Three Years' War.* By Christiaan Rudolf De Wet. London: Constable.

not by love or patriotism that he kept his men together: his men followed him, obeyed him, died for him, because they feared his displeasure more than they dreaded the bullet of the enemy. That was De Wet the leader of men. Of De Wet the strategist and soldier we will deal in detail as we examine his book,—a book which, in our opinion, he would have been wise to have left unwritten. It is a book full of De Wet's successes,—there is bare mention of his failures: it teems with the author's appreciation of himself in every capacity—as a public man, as general, statesman, and lawgiver. It is with the soldier that we have to deal.

If we take De Wet at his own valuation, we find him an eminent strategist, a brave unflinching hero, and a tactician of no mean order. In part this is true; but the knowledge that it was so would have been much more convincing if we had not found it inferred by the writer on every page of his book. How far is it right that we should accept the arrogant and insolent tone in which his narrative is couched? Giving the author credit for constitutional ill-nature and lack of education, how far are his contemptuous references to British methods warranted? Let us take the following for examples: "But I cannot resist saying that the British only learned the art of scouting during the latter part of the war, when they made use of the Boer deserters—the 'hands - uppers.'" Or again, "The English will, with

their well-known predilection for a flank attack on every possible occasion, shall," &c. The book teems with small-minded innuendoes such as these, and the intelligent reader cannot but ask himself, of what value is this satire, when we believe that the man who passes it learned the art of self-preservation in war from the standpoint of the hunted rather than that of the hunter. Herein lies the core of De Wet's book. You find it in such passages as the following, where the simple truthful man breaks through the veneer of self-appreciation which otherwise distorts the narrative: "Then, to our immense relief, the sun went down. How often during our long struggle for independence had not the setting sun seemed to lift a leaden weight from my shoulders!" Such passages—and they abound—are surer landmarks of the limitations of De Wet's military genius than all the shadow he attempts to throw upon British surrenders in order to make his own prowess stand out in bold relief.

Before plunging elbow-deep into De Wet's battles we would say one word about this scouting of which the author is so proud. He himself, and for this we will give him credit, as a matter of personal safety, instituted two corps of selected scouts as part of his personal entourage. The one was under the lawyer Davie Theron, the other controlled by the ill-fated Scheepers. All told, De Wet had in his personal employ close upon a hundred selected

scouts. They served him well, and it must be allowed that to a great degree it was to their diligence that De Wet owed the long lease of his military career. We are not sure that it was not in his appreciation of the value of information that De Wet showed himself at his best as a soldier—in this and insisting upon the mobility of his commandoes. But now we come to the matter of the superiority of the Boer in scouting. De Wet in his arrogance maintains that the surrendered Boers taught the British to scout. This is but ill-natured reflection. The British, like the Boer, including De Wet's own special scouts, improved with the experience which the war brought them. But there is a side to the Boer scouting which we have never yet seen touched upon, in spite of all that has been written upon the subject. It is this. You will find in every country where population is sparse, and the people live far apart, that the inhabitants are more observant than in those countries where men lead a more gregarious life. It is easy to understand why this should be so: the faculties are not strained to study a thousand unexpected incidents in an hour, consequently every Boer farm, if not a prolific intelligence base, was an accurate information bureau. The smallest Boer child would know if Piet Fourie, the Free Stater, or Captain Pretorius of the Staats Artillerie, had been there within the week. Also would be able to suggest

that the British troops which had halted by the *pan* an hour ago had been *Africanders*, since they spoke the *Taal*. Another condition which was all in favour of the Boer was the fact that he wore no distinctive dress or uniform. During the first year of the war nearly the whole of the information which percolated to the Boer leaders was owing to the facility that their conventional costume gave for securing information. If you could have removed this natural advantage which peace and circumstance gave to the Boer, we believe that, man for man, the Boer was not a much better scout than the British soldier. You get inner evidence of this in the pages of De Wet's book. Inadvertently the author constantly speaks of *Burghers* bringing him wrong information and upsetting his plans in consequence.

The points which will most strike the military student in De Wet's work are the very obvious lacunæ. Instinctively, upon opening the volume, we turn to find that portion of the work which will refute the allegations publicly made concerning his misconduct with regard to Major Bogle-Smith of the King's Dragoon Guards, his maltreatment of the *De-wetsdorp* prisoners, and the murder of the peace envoy *Morgenthaal*. We turn from one portion of the narrative to another. There is no mention of the circumstances for which we search. The work does not contain the name *Morgenthaal*; and as to the

treatment of the prisoners, the author goes out of his way to point out how humane and considerate his treatment of them has been. Here, indeed, are disappointing omissions,—disappointing enough to give rise to a suspicion. We continue to turn over the leaves of the volume. We turn to those engagements in which we know that this self-esteemed autobiographist fell into disaster. The suspicion is confirmed, for we turn to De Wet's account of Bothaville and find the following meagre mention of that desperate struggle: "The leader of the enemy's storming party was Colonel Le Gallais. . . . *On this occasion he did not encounter much resistance*, for only a very few of the Burghers attacked him." We have italicised the statement, since, if not an actual falsehood, it is a distinct perversion of the truth. We have but to refer to the British officers and men who took part in the engagement, to know that it were futile to pass it by as a trumpery skirmish. But it is possible to surmise that De Wet narrates just as much of the affair as he himself saw, and if this be the case, there may be more truth in his own story as a personal narrative than as a historical record. It is declared in connection with this success, in which we captured seven pieces of ordnance, took many prisoners, and lost several distinguished officers, that De Wet was off at the first shot

and put into practice that portion of his military maxim about mobility which at the moment most suited his convenience.¹

If any reader with some little inside knowledge of the war has now curiosity enough left to turn to the chapters which deal with the invasion of Cape Colony, he will find sufficient misrepresentation to warrant all that has been said already with regard to the want of accuracy of the work. The author had not the face to completely "burk" his disastrous invasion of Cape Colony. But he has so handled it that it would appear that it was more or less an uninterrupted foray into a neighbouring state, which, though the invaders suffered some inconvenience through the presence of English columns, yet they were not greatly impeded, and continued to take prisoners to the very end, just whenever a little variety in the day's work was pleasing to them. The weather incommoded them more than anything else, and necessitated the abandoning of a gun or two. That was all. Now for the true story of this adventure of De Wet's in Cape Colony we would refer our readers to the recent publication 'On the Heels of De Wet,' which the "Intelligence Officer" first contributed as papers to this Magazine. A comparison of a few passages from this book with passages in De Wet's work is instructive.

¹ On p. 99 of 'Three Years' War' we find, "We had to be quick at fighting, quick at reconnoitring, quick (if it became necessary) at flying"!

Here we have two descriptions diametrically opposed to each other of De Wet crossing the railway at Haut Kraal:—

Three Years' War, p. 262.

"Any delay was dangerous, and so we hurried on as fast as possible. When we reached the railway line day had already begun to break. Fortunately we met with no opposition; the patrols had followed my orders and broken the line."

On the Heels of De Wet, p. 180.

"Unprepared for the arrival of fresh troops, spoiled of guns and ammunition, kicked and harried by the gallant Plumer's tenacity, riddled and torn by Nanton's armoured trains, harassed by Heneker and Crabbe, panting for rest . . ."

Again it is worth the reader's while to study in duplicate the passage of the Orange River by Hasebroek's commando, which took place a few days later:—

Three Years' War, p. 271.

"They could then proceed along the banks of the river and cross it by means of the boat . . . In this the poor Burghers succeeded; they already, on that memorable and sad day, had marched eighteen miles; but they had yet to cover another five miles to the river before they could take their night's rest. They accomplished this feat (on the second day) under the valiant and true Commandant Hasebroek. . . ."

On the Heels of De Wet, p. 263.

"One of the columns had sent out 300 men and a pom-pom in pursuit of Hasebroek's fugitives, and the force had returned with quite a haul of prisoners. They had come across the rearmost of them as they were in the act of crossing the river in a rickety punt, which vessel had been scientifically rendered unseaworthy by a well-directed belt of pom-pom shells. . . . Amongst the whole 200 prisoners that were brought in that day . . ."

This invasion of Cape Colony, as described in De Wet's book, also furnishes some indication of the working of the author's mind, and the duplicity of his methods, if it is placed side by side with the other version of the story,—a version which we know to be true:—

Three Years' War, p. 261.

"The ninety prisoners we had taken were with me. I could not release them, because I did not want them to tell the enemy how exhausted our horses were. Should the English know this they would know exactly where our weak point lay. I pitied the poor 'Tommies,' but what else could I do but order them to march with me? I treated them as well as I could, and made no difference between them and the Burghers . . ."

On the Heels of De Wet, p. 195.

"These men having been pilfered of much of their wearing apparel, including boots, could only with the greatest difficulty keep pace with the rapid movements of their captors. It must be remembered that the sleuth-hound Plumer was on De Wet's trail, and the Boers had no time to waste if they were to evade him. There came a time when the half-starved, almost naked, and foot-sore prisoners could move no more. . . . These wretched prisoners lay down and refused to move another foot. . . . Then some one rode forward and informed De Wet."

What happened need not be told in parallel columns. Officially, since we have received and treated with De Wet as a

principal, the offence must have been condoned. Morally it can never be forgotten or forgiven. Let us examine the methods of this modern general, this paladin of military genius, for whom nothing was too good when he visited this country. According to his own version he "treated them as well as he could"—that is, he called for the senior officer and brutally struck him. This cannot be denied. There are fifty witnesses of the blow and the officer's gallant attempt at retaliation. But as it is not the intention in this paper to shock the readers with sordid details, let it remain sufficient that the case against De Wet is proved as follows. He singled out a captive officer, and, because the latter was unable to order his men to continue a march for which they were physically incapable, he vented his anger on a helpless man whom it should have been his duty to protect. Some have attempted to excuse him on the plea of military expedience. It is not necessary to argue upon this point. In our view it was a deliberate attempt to coerce prisoners of war by torture. Such a blow should have struck so deeply into the quick of the nation that the scenes which were witnessed during the visit of the Boer leaders to this country should have been impossible. As we were prepared to expect, after the initial pages of the volume, there is no mention of this incident in 'Three Years' War'; possibly when he came to this portion

of his narrative the author remembered that earlier in the work, when speaking of British prisoners, he had penned this statement: "But I cared nothing to what regiment they belonged or what was the rank of the officer in command. Throughout the whole war I never troubled myself about such matters"!

No one will deny that De Wet was successful as a guerilla, much as he himself resents this truthful estimate of his military career. But the fact is obvious, and becomes the more patent from a perusal of his book, in spite of his translator's and his own arguments to the contrary. It will now be our endeavour to balance De Wet's more notable successes against his failures. Of the former we find abundant evidence in 'Three Years' War'; the latter, if we are to trust the self-opinionated Boer, barely exist, and those which cannot be conveniently omitted from the narrative are mentioned as unimportant incidents. During the three years in which De Wet was in the field, as far as we can see, the few considerable *coups* which he brought off were seven in number—viz., Nicholson's Nek, Waterval Drift convoy, Sannah's Post, Reddersburg, Roodeval, Dewetsdorp, and Tweefontein. For the rest he was constantly endeavouring to put into execution schemes more ambitious than the picking up of stray columns, which schemes invariably ended in hopeless failure, leaving the guiding brain a fugitive for weeks to come. It is upon the

seven successes enumerated above that De Wet's reputation for military genius has been built. Let us see how far this reputation is justified. We will take the engagements in the order in which they occurred.

The first is Nicholson's Nek. According to De Wet's own description of this engagement, he lays claim to all the success which fell to the Free State commandoes that day. The narrative opens with the more modest use of the pronoun "we," which includes Commandants Steenkamp and Nel in the cabinet; but once it comes to the story of the fighting, De Wet uses the first person, so that the reader must infer that the credit of the success rests solely with himself. Now the 'Times' "History" is singularly well informed with regard to this particular action, and we find the following editorial note touching upon the Boer leadership on this occasion: "The credit of this move seems rightly to belong to Christian De Wet. His brother, Piet De Wet, was, however, also present in command of some of the Kroonstad Burghers, whom he led with skill and courage up the west side of the hill. In fact, almost up to his surrender in July 1900, Piet De Wet enjoyed a higher reputation as a leader than his brother." This would show that De Wet had no exclusive right to the whole credit of the Nicholson's Nek affair, and it is quite possible that he is trading on his brother Piet's reputation, whom he only mentions in his book in "Conspuez Dreyfus" parenthesis,

owing to the latter's connection with the National Scouts. We are confirmed in the opinion that De Wet's military genius has been antedated to fit in with Nicholson's Nek, by the fact that he was kept "hanging about" with the Heilbron laager outside Ladysmith until December 10. If he had come to the front, as is suggested in his book, it is hardly reasonable to believe that he would have been omitted from accompanying Louis Botha's flying column to Weenen, one-third of which was composed of Free State Burghers.

At Waterval Drift De Wet was certainly in command. But the success, like so many of the Boer successes in the war, was not due to any particular genius on the part of the Boer leader. There is no very comprehensive genius in the action of a boy who breaks into an orchard to steal apples. If the owner is not there, the chances are that the raider will get the apples. The simile presents an analogy to the capture of this convoy at Waterval Drift. According to De Wet's estimate, he had 350 men and two guns. The escort to the convoy, which was several miles long when in motion, consisted of 200 men and a few mounted infantry which happened to be passing. Owing to the absence of the owner of the apples, De Wet, the superior force, was able to possess himself of the best positions in the vicinity. By the evening the British were reinforced, and became the superior force; but they did not fight as such, though De Wet's account

would infer otherwise. They would have fought on the following morning, if it had not been considered expedient to abandon the convoy as a lesser evil than the loss of Cronje, which might have been the result of a halt to turn De Wet out of his position. Such a reasoning is beyond the scope of De Wet's intelligence, and he evinces great surprise that the British did not attack him on the following morning, but left him in possession of "the apples." It is interesting, while reading De Wet's narrative of the engagement, to note that he bestows great praise on the fighting quality of his enemy. This subtle trick of the Boer mind has had the desired effect with the majority of reviewers of the book. A close study of the volume under notice, however, will show that whenever De Wet relates a success due to superiority in numbers, he invariably tries to throw his own prowess into relief by praising the fighting quality of his opponents. Tweefontein is perhaps the most striking example of this.

Sannah's Post was of course De Wet's most signal success, though on his own showing it was designed only as a guerilla raid on the small detachment of Mounted Infantry holding the Bloemfontein waterworks. That the trap which De Wet set, in which he hoped to ambush 200 men with 350, succeeded in embroiling a weak cavalry brigade was pure luck. Broadwood was practically upon De Wet's men before the latter could reconstruct a plan to

deal with so large a force otherwise than he did. There was no course open but to "reap the harvest" which Providence had provided. The details of Sannah's Post are so well known that we will not dwell upon them beyond allowing that this action found the author at his best as a soldier, though he never pressed his success. If De Wet had led his 350 men as well as Van de Merve captained the troops which attacked Alderson that day, the actual results might have been appalling.

We have given De Wet every credit for that display of energy which was responsible for most of his success, whether it was in the destruction of small detached posts or the evasion of British pursuit, and it was purely this energy which made it possible for him to capture the Dewetsdorp column near Reddersburg. Of the accusations of treachery which De Wet makes against us in his account of this action we will not take notice, as in all these cases the recrimination has generally been mutual, and it must always be remembered that it is now more difficult to control a force *en masse* than in former wars, owing to the extended front of fire even of a small detachment.

Roodeval, with which we must incorporate all De Wet's attacks in June-July of 1900 on the railway communication and convoys plying between Zand River and Vereeniging, were purely fillibustering raids. They required little military genius, and were simple opera-

tions to men who knew the country and had sufficient energy to strike rapidly. Dewetsdorp, however, was a success which was gained by more skilful manipulation, and if the following be true, then we may give De Wet credit for putting into practice that subtlety for which the Boer is famous, and which when applied to war has made him a dangerous, if not vigorous, enemy: "On the 19th I made a point of advancing during the *day*, so as to be observed by the garrison of Dewetsdorp; . . . but on the evening of the same day I marched very quietly back to Dewetsdorp, and crept up as close as I dared to the positions held by the enemy's garrison." This, without doubt, was useful strategy upon a humble scale. Its quality is enhanced, because Dewetsdorp succumbed to an attack in overpowering force; but we only have De Wet's authority that Major Massy was duped by the duplicity of which the author makes so much. Without waiting to consider this, certain reviewers of 'Three Years' War' have been pleased to read the British army a lesson in minor strategy, taking their text from the words of wisdom which they think they perceive in De Wet's book. We can hasten to inform these critics that there is little purpose in their ponderous lecturing. If the strategy as set forth in 'Three Years' War' is the limit of the lessons which De Wet is to teach us, then the British officer has very little to learn. For ourselves we do not know if any of De

Wet's reflections have been made upon a more honest basis than mere supposition. All we can ascertain from his volume is that he has filled in the skeleton of the narrative, which is common property, with much that is untrue, much that is small-minded, and much that is mere afterthought.

From Dewetsdorp we will pass on to Tweefontein, the last and possibly the most surprising of De Wet's successes. There are so many conflicting stories in circulation with regard to this affair, that it is difficult to form a just appreciation of the true merits of the action either as an attack or as a defence. But as the narrator allows that his force sustained casualties to the extent of fourteen killed and thirty wounded, in whatever condition the Yeomanry were discovered they must have "put up" a reasonable resistance. De Wet himself gives them considerable credit, more so than anybody else; but this, for reasons already given, cannot be accepted as altogether disinterested testimony. However, if De Wet's statements with regard to his preparation of this *coup* are true, there is every evidence to show that the three years' experience of war has not been thrown away upon him, and that he brought his matured lore to bear with astonishing effect.

So much for De Wet's successes. We will now deal with his failures. We will not lay stress upon his attempt to relieve Cronje at Paardeberg: in

spite of his own sanguine appreciation of the situation, we believe that he attempted the impossible. To his miserable failure before Wepener De Wet devotes a short chapter of four pages. Having failed in the initial surprise, the best that he could do was to lose in attempted assaults five killed and thirteen wounded. As these casualties were spread over a period of sixteen days, it is not difficult to estimate the nature of these assaults or the quality of the genius which directed them.

With the solitary exception of Sannah's Post,—and even here it should be remembered that he was directly supported by A. P. Cronje, W. Wessels, and Froneman with 1100 men and artillery, and indirectly by Olivier with another considerable force,—whenever De Wet attempted a more comprehensive movement than a mere smothering of a convoy or detached post, his genius was confined to extricating himself and his immediate following from the wreckage of the enterprise. In spite of all the moral and soldierly sentiment expressed in chapter xvii. concerning the surrender of Prinsloo, De Wet's share in the Brandwater Basin affair was that of the man leading the field in a hunt point-to-point race, with personal safety as the winning-post. During the period of his first transfer to the Transvaal, his operations were confined to seeking safety in flight. During his second tour north of the Vaal, he essayed conclusions with the

force at Frederickstad; but on this occasion there was too much equality in the numbers of the rival forces, and he again failed badly as the leader of a well-defined military enterprise. Bothaville we have already discussed.

Of his two systematic attempts at an invasion of Cape Colony it is hardly necessary to make further mention. The second we have already examined in order to form an opinion of the general accuracy of the work: the first was rendered abortive by the co-operation of General Sir Charles Knox, though De Wet himself seems fairly satisfied with the part he played throughout this failure—an attitude of self-confidence which he admirably maintains through every page of the work. After the failure of his attempt in Cape Colony, De Wet disappears for a considerable period from public notice. He himself does not give us much information as to how he spent his time during this period; but it would seem that he was principally employed in drumming up recruits, and infusing more cohesion into the Free State resistance, which had now reached such a low ebb that it required constant propping and support. In this field De Wet was a tower of strength, and the mainstay of Mr Steyn's desperate attempts to prolong the one-sided struggle. The notoriety which had been given to De Wet's successes, out of all proportion to their actual military significance, had brought him an influence which, added to his

masterful and often brutal nature, proved stronger with the ruck of the Burghers than any other agency for coercion which Mr Steyn could bring to bear.

De Wet would not be a Boer if he did not moralise throughout his work. The value of his moral sayings are about on a par with the hypocritical sanctity so generally affected by the Boers as a nation. His sense of proportion is also weak, and his arguments are obviously framed to suit his own convenience. There is no answer to such reasoning as appears in the following sentence, and we only quote it as a fair sample of the material in which the work abounds: "It was to obviate such a catastrophe as this that the custom of *uitchudden* [stripping prisoners] came into force. The Burghers, although against orders, stripped every prisoner. The English had begun by taking away or burning the clothes which the Burghers had left in their houses,—this was bad enough. But that they should cut up the hides which they found in the tanning-tubs was still worse; and—the Burghers paid them back in the same coin by stripping the troops."

It is our opinion that De Wet's inherent ignorance and vanity is clearly proved in his short chapter devoted to the "Blockhouse System." The designers of this scheme had never anticipated that it would be impossible for the enemy to penetrate between the blockhouses under cover of darkness. But De Wet, because he found

himself able to do so, has been pleased to condemn them, without troubling to formulate a broader appreciation of their uses. A last reference to 'On the Heels of De Wet' admirably shows the limitations of the military genius who describes the "*blockhouse* system" as "the policy of the *blockhead*." Here we find in a footnote: "After practically a year of the unsatisfactory groping referred to in the text, the conception of the blockhouse system enabled mounted troops to operate far into the vital interior of the country without returning to the railway. It must be understood that the main use of the blockhouse line was not to stretch an impassable *chevaux-de-frise* from point to point, but to furnish a series of posts, which ensured the safety of the convoys that followed their trend. By this means it was possible to keep columns operating in the interior supplied with food and forage." Commandant-General Botha, in his speech to the assembled delegates at Vereeniging, indorsed this view. He said, "They were in a most pitiable state, now that the lines of blockhouses had been extended in all directions all over the country." But of course the intellect of De Wet will not stand comparison with that of Louis Botha. When De Wet inveighs against the blockhouses and in the same breath extols the practice of systematic night-attack, he has failed to realise that the blockhouses were but a means to this very end. Having failed to realise

this, what reliance can be placed in his military perspicacity!

We should like to deal at length with other features in this remarkable narrative, but space will not allow of a full examination. Therefore with regret we must leave undiscussed the minutes of the Peace Conference. On such points as the inaccurate rendering of the detail of De Wet's attack upon Leeuwspruit, concerning which there has recently been some correspondence in the 'Times,' it is impossible to make full note. But this is hardly necessary, since we have shown that very considerable inaccuracies occur in more important statements in the book. In short,

to come to a final conclusion, 'Three Years' War' would seem to be the work of an ignorant man, who, having met with some military successes of a minor type, has come to the opinion that he has proved himself a genius in war. To his credit be it said that the more hysterical press of this country has materially helped him to this conclusion. The outline of the narrative is truthful; but the writer has been so carried away by appreciation of his own military powers that he has not scrupled to suit the unfolding of the narrative so as to support the theories which he has formed about himself.

A LAY OF OSSIAN AND PATRICK.

[*Note.*—Of all the songs and stories handed down from a remote past in Ireland, none have preserved so strong a hold on popular imagination as those which tell of Finn MacCool and his Fianna (or, as we might say, his “braves”), who defended the land from invasion in the days of Cormac MacArt, High King of Eire. All of them are represented as being told in a later day by Ossian, last survivor of the Fianna, Finn’s own son, who accepted the fairy Niav’s challenge, and went off with her to her own country; where, after a little time as it seemed, he “thought long” for Ireland, and, against her warning, returned, only to find that centuries had gone over him, that he himself, as he touched the soil, grew old and broken, that his comrades were dead and forgotten, and that a new faith had transformed the land. Men brought him to St Patrick, and the stories are all told as colloquies between the old warrior and his evangelisers; and always the bards delighted to throw the listener’s sympathy on the side of Ossian and the forbidden full-blooded joys of the past—love, chase, and battle. Much of the tradition has been preserved in manuscript, and much of this has been made accessible in print. But the episode which I have versified will be new even to many scholars, though it has been published, I find, by Dr Hyde in some French journal. But the illiterates have it by heart. My friend Mr Seumas MacManus heard it from an evicted cottier in the heart of the Donegal mountains, who lay bedridden in a kind of kennel formed by propping sticks against the gable of his ruined cabin, and covering them with heather scraws. To sit and write in this lair was impossible; so the student lay at full length on the roof, beside the vent-hole, at once window and chimney, while inside the shanachy, on his bed of rushes and heather, chanted the lay. In another part of the same county I myself heard from a more prosperous shanachy the same legend, identical in incident; but in it the enchanted flail, which led the Fianna in their labour of Sisyphus, was given to another hero than Gull. But I think MacMorna had a right to the weapon, so I leave it in his hand. I write his name as it is pronounced, as also that of Finn MacCool; while Ossian has become traditional, and in any case represents fairly the Ulster pronunciation of Oisín, who in the south would be Usheen.]

*I TELL you an ancient story
Learnt on an Irish strand,
Of lonely Ossian returning
Belated from fairyland.*

*To a land grown meek and holy,
To a land of mass and bell,
Under the hope of heaven,
Under the dread of hell:*

*It tells how the bard and warrior,
Last of a giant race,
Wrestled a year with Patrick,
Answering face to face.*

*Mating the praise of meekness
With vaunt of the warrior school,
And the glory of God the Father
With the glory of Finn MacCool;*

*Until at the last the hero,
Through fasting and through prayer,
Came to the faith of Christians,
And turned from the things that were.*

When the holy bread was broken,
And the water wet on his brow,
And the last of the fierce Fianna
Had spoken the Christian vow,

In a sudden glory Patrick,
Seeing the fierce grown mild,
Laughed with joy on his convert,
Like father on first-born child.

"Well was for you, O Ossian,
You came to the light," he said,
"And now I will show you the torment
From which to our God you fled."

Then with a pass of his crozier
He put a spell on the air,
And there fell a mist on the eyeballs
Of Ossian standing there.

Shapes loomed up through the darkness,
And "Now," says the saint, "look well;
See your friends the Fianna,
And all their trouble in hell."

Ossian stared through the darkness,
Saw, as the mist grew clear,
Legions of swarth-hued warriors
Raging with sword and spear:

Footmen, huge and misshapen,
Stiffened with snarling ire;
Chariots with hell-black stallions
Champing a spume of fire,

And all of the grim-faced battle,
With clash and yell and neigh,
Dashed on a knot of warriors
Set in a rank at bay.

Ossian looked, and he knew them,
Knew each man of them well,
Knew his friends, the Fianna,
There in the pit of hell.

There was his very father,
Leader of all their bands,
Finn, the terrible wrestler,
Griping with giant hands:

Oscar with edged blade smiting,
Caoilté with charging lance,
And Diarmuid poising his javelin,
Nimble as in the dance;

Conan, the crop-eared stabber,
Aiming a slant-way stroke,
And the fiery Lugach leaping
Where the brunt of battle broke.

But in front of all by a furlong,
There in the hell-light pale,
Was the champion, Gull MacMorna,
Winding a monstrous flail.

And still the flail as he swung it
Sang through the maddened air,
Singing the deeds of heroes,
A song of the days that were.

It swung with a shrilling of pipers,
It smote with a thud of drums,
It leapt and it whirled in battle,
Crying, "Gull MacMorna comes."

It leapt and it smote, and the devils
Shrieked under every blow;
With the very wind of its whistling
Warriors were stricken low.

It swept a path through the army
Wide as a winter flood,
And down that lane the Fianna
Charged in a wash of blood.

Patrick gazed upon Ossian ;
But Ossian watched to descry
The surf and the tide of battle
Turn, as in days gone by.

And lo ! at the sudden onslaught
The fighters of Eire made,
And under the flail of MacMorna
The host of the foemen swayed,

Broke ; and Ossian, breathless,
Heard the exultant yell
Of his comrades hurling the devils
Back to the wall of hell.

And the sword-blades reaped like sickles,
And the javelins fell like hail,
And louder and ever louder
Rose the song of the flail,

As whirling in air the striker
Sang clear, or thudded dull,—
When, woe ! the tug on a sudden
Snapped in the grasp of Gull.

Hand-staff and striker parted ;
The song of the flail was dumb,—
On the heart of Ossian, listening,
Fell that silence numb.

And oh ! for a time uncounted
He watched with straining eyes
The tide of the devils' battle
Quickened and turn and rise.

He watched the Fianna's onset
Waver and hang in doubt,
He watched his leaderless comrades
Swept in a struggling rout.

But Gull, with a shield before him,
Crouched on the battle ground,
And there in the track of slaughter
Tore at what he found.

"Courage, O new-made Christian :
Great is my joy in you,—
I would like it ill on a day of grace
My son should have aught to rue.

"Therefore for these your comrades
I give you a wish to-day
That shall lift them out of their torment
Into some better way.

"Speak! be bold in your asking,
Christ is strong to redeem"—
Ossian turned to him sudden,
Like one awaked from a dream.

"I ask no help of the Father,
I ask no help of the Son,
Nor of the Holy Spirit,
Ever Three in One.

"This for my only asking,
And then let might prevail,—
Patrick, give Gull MacMorna
An iron tug to his flail."

*Patrick is dead, and Ossian ;
Gull to his place is gone ;
But the words and the deeds of heroes
Linger in twilight on,—*

*In a twilight of fireside tellings
Lit by the poet's lay,
Lighting the gloom of hardship,
The night of a needy day.*

*And still the Gael, as he listens
In a land of mass and bell
Under the hope of heaven,
Under the dread of hell,*

*Thinks long, like age-spent Ossian,
For the things that are no more,
For the clash of meeting weapons,
And the mad delight of war.*

STEPHEN GWYNN

Until in the crash and tumult,
And dashed with a bloody rain,
He had knotted his flail together
With sinews out of the slain.

Then, as the gasping Fianna
Felt their endeavour fail,
Chanting their ancient valour
Rose the voice of the flail.

And again in the stagnant ebbing
Of their blood began to flow
The flood of a surging courage,
The hope of a crowning blow ;

And the heart of their comrade watching,
Stirred with joy to behold
Feats of his bygone manhood,
Strokes that he knew of old.

Again he beheld the stubborn
Setting of targe to targe,
Again he beheld the rally
Swell to a shattering charge.

And surely now the Fianna
Must slaughter and whelm the foe
In a fierce and final triumph,
Lords of the realm below,

As they leapt in a loosened phalanx,
Climbing on heaps of slain ;
And again Gull's wizard weapon
Flew on a stroke in twain.

For a time and times uncounted
Ossian endured the sight
Of the endless swaying tumult,
The ebb and flow of the fight.

His face grew lean with sorrow,
And hunger stared from his eyes,
And the labouring breath from his bosom
Broke in heavy sighs.

Patrick watched, and he wondered,
And at last in pity spoke :
"Vexed is your look, O Ossian,
As your very heart were broke.

"Courage, O new-made Christian :
Great is my joy in you,—
I would like it ill on a day of grace
My son should have aught to rue.

"Therefore for these your comrades
I give you a wish to-day
That shall lift them out of their torment
Into some better way.

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STEPHEN GWYNN

CHRISTMAS WITH THE "PROFLIGATE ADVENTURERS."

"HULLA-GULLA! Hulla-gulla! Hulla-gulla!" It is the voice of the old muezzin calling the Mohammedan quarter of the *basti*¹ to morning prayer. What he is really saying is "Allah-o-Akbar," but in the quavering articulation of the hoary priest the incitation bears no sound to the unbeliever other than the monotonous repetition given above. It seems strange that on Christmas morning the first sound to break the stillness of the night and strike upon the ear should be anything but a joyous peal of bells. But except to the very, very few—the microscopic leaven of white men and the handful of apostate natives—Christmas Day dawns in India much as any other cold weather morning. True, it is an official holiday, and the jackals of the law courts starve for a single day. Beyond this, to the great teeming mass living in wealth and poverty throughout the whole peninsula, it means nothing. An initiated few realise that it is a feast-day for the *sahibs*, and as such calculate how they can best use it to their own advantage. But to the Englishman, wherever he be,—toiling in the tropics in the great task of empire-keeping, wandering on the waters, or plying his ubiquitous energy in the frigid zones,—Christmas has its own special meaning for him. Whether he be the satrap of a

mighty province, or belted soldier facing death, or missionary pursuing his heaven-sent mission, or lowly sailor in the fo'c'sle of an ocean tramp, at some moment on this day his thoughts will turn to the mansion, villa, or cottage which to him brings the magic memories of home.

It is the object of this paper to take the reader into one of those far-off Indian districts where the march of civilisation has not absolutely destroyed the traditions of the white man; where contact with the West has only arrived through the class of men whom Macaulay in his vicious bigotry classed as "profligate adventurers." Here, within faint view of the giant Himalayas, is still to be found somewhat of that respect, of that fear and even reverence for the white man, which in the main was responsible for their original power in the East. The world is flooded with the literature of official Anglo-India. We have it in the memoirs of each great soldier and governor. We have it in the fiction which holds up to admiration or contempt the social life of all the official seats of Government. We have it in the reminiscences of every "globe-trotter" who records his fleeting vision of the splendour and wonders of the East. But of the non-official white men, as true and good Englishmen as the most decor-

¹ Village.

ated official, we have but little record. On the one hand he may be called an adventurer, on the other a merchant prince. And here it rests. Therefore let me take you on this Christmas morning far into the *Mofusil*¹ and introduce you to a hardy race of deserving white men, who beyond all others have kept alive those magnificent traditions upon which were built the foundations of old John Company. For the most part they are the grandsons and great-grandsons of the sturdy pioneers who, turning their backs upon the machinations of the then official despotism, struck out deep into the country and opened up channels of commercial enterprise which were in time to be estimated in many millions.

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The voice of the muezzin dies away in a long thin wail. It has been sufficient, and doubtless all devout Mohammedans are spreading their little prayer-carpet in front of their dwellings. In the unbelieving household of the sahib it has but little effect beyond arousing the village chowkidar, who, noisy custodian of the peace, invariably makes it his duty, when there are no thieves about, to sleep upon the sahib's verandah. Warned by the plaintive call to prayer, he sits up and pulls his disordered blue turban over his ears to protect them from the cold, and commences to caterwaul, that his small world may benefit by the knowledge that

he is awake and watching. His shoutings raise the servants of the household, and as the morning light strengthens, dim figures, very much muffled as to their heads and bare as to their legs, begin to flit about the kitchen and outhouses. Suddenly they all bend in mute salaam. A portly gentleman in the whitest of white robes—for he knows that it is Christmas morning—is passing up the verandah steps. It is the sirdar, the butler of the household, and he walks gravely into the house to squat at his master's door until the great man shall be pleased to call for him. Hot weather or cold, people rise early in India, and it is still hardly honest daylight when the shout "Qua hai!" starts the first bustle within the household. The sirdar calls to the kitchen, and in a moment three khitmugars in the livery of the house arrive bearing trays of steaming tea. One is handed to the bundle of clothes which in the case represents the lady's-maid of Western idea; another tray is taken to the lord of the house, while the third is for the honoured guest. In the dressing-room the sirdar, before kneeling with great dignity to adjust his master's socks, informs him with the deepest salutation that it is Christmas Day. The khitmugar with the tea-tray echoes this news, and doubtless the bundle of clothes in the inner chamber informs her mistress of the fact and solicits some *douceur* in con-

¹ Country districts.

sideration of past services and promised services to come.

In an Anglo-Indian household buried far within the Mofusil the early morning meal is generally the feature of the day. If not too cold it will be taken on the verandah; and if, as it does on this occasion, the weather will allow it, Christmas morning furnishes a fascinating page of native life. Already before the sahib has appeared the whole strength of the senior servants in the factory has paraded to make their obeisance. Each has put on a clean turban and a brand-new suit of clothes, and as a special mark of respect those that are more warmly clad will have donned muslins above the thicker textures. The sahib steps out on to the verandah and, expert agriculturist as he is, throws his first glance to the sky above to ascertain the nature of the weather. In the meantime the white-robed servants bend double in correct salaam. Then led by the senior, a Rajput Jemedar, each in turn files up to the steps and presents a silver coin for the sahib's acceptance. The custom is not to take the rupee. The sahib just puts forward his right hand and lightly touches the coin, and the homage is considered given and accepted.

But behind the factory servants is another class of well-wisher. A hundred and one clients of the factory—native bankers, interested landowners, influential merchants—have each chosen the day to be the

occasion of some considerable gift. The one will have sent a basket of fruit or vegetable, another a box of spices, a third dried fruit that tells of Cabul packing; and even the more humble of the tenants, the ordinary fisher-folk that rent the river rights, have brought the best catch from their evening's labours. All these gifts are laid out upon the verandah to please the house-keeping instinct of the mem-sahib when she shall arrive. Then suddenly the crowd is pushed aside, and a young native, exquisitely dressed after the manner appertaining to the youths who have studied in the Calcutta universities, presses forward with a heavy basket borne on the head of a coolie. He is the son of a man desirous of the sub-lease of a building contract, and he seizes the occasion as one likely to influence the owner of the contract. He has been farther afield than his more ignorant fellows; he has visited the dry-store at the nearest railway-station, and there has purchased a miscellaneous collection of the food-stuffs exported by the great canning industries of the world. Conscious of his efforts, he is careful as he makes the presentation to enumerate the prices of the various articles.

Then the lady of the house appears, and again the whole assembled throng almost sweeps the ground in the exuberance of its salutation. For the time being the court is at an end, and with a wave of his hand the sahib dismisses his depend-

ants, and settles to his morning meal.

The sound of bare feet is heard pattering along the drive. Perspiring from every pore, a half-naked savage comes panting into the verandah. It is the dak-walla,¹ who, conscious that he brings the Christmas mail, has made half an hour on the limit allowed for his ten-mile run. The key is produced, and the leather satchel falls open to display that which is dearer to all exiles in India than anything else, the covers that bring messages from home. It is not for us here to enter into the details of their contents. It may be messages from the aged parents in their home in Sussex; it may be a scrawling note from the child which has been separated from its mother these five long years; or it may be from the old friend who once was an everyday companion, and who, though separated by the chance of life, never forgets the past.

There is to be a Christmas gathering, and it is not long before the guests arrive. The first is the cheery parson. He has driven his old mare twenty miles, but that is nothing. Did he not drive her forty when Angus Smith lay dying a year ago? she can surely then cover twenty miles to hold a Christian service among a little colony of exiles. He is received by host and hostess with that bonhomie and delightful welcome which is only to be found amongst exiles in a foreign land. The next guest is a

youth. He has come fifteen miles at a hand-canter rather than spend his Christmas Day alone. It is almost worth a journey to India to see the manner in which he sits his horse, for this kind are the men who from their youth up have earned their living in the saddle. And all through an hour bidden and unbidden guests continue to drop in, until at least a gathering of twenty is made.

A short service is held in the drawing-room, and then the whole party prepares to spend the morning in a pastime which appeals to most Englishmen, whether at home or abroad. The young man whose horsemanship we have already noticed disappears to the stables and shortly returns, surrounded by the most heterogeneous pack of hounds that ever caused a sportsman's pulse to quicken in its beat. In leash are two couple of foxhounds. These had been imported the previous year from England. Hunted through the cold weather, they were bought up at the end of the season by the youthful planter to become the nucleus of his "bobbery" pack. To support his foxhounds he depended upon two gaunt half-bred greyhounds, a civilised pariah, and a dozen maybe offshoots and complications of the fox-terrier breed. You in your pink coats and well-polished tops may possibly despise so quaint an assortment, but those who have hunted behind such a pack

¹ Post-messenger.

know the fun and pleasure to be attained, even though it is the humblest imitation of the real pastime.

While the nondescript terriers are disporting themselves in the sheer ecstasy of the knowledge that they are to be out that morning, a dozen syces have arrived with a dozen horses almost as heterogeneous as the pack itself. Horses of all shapes and sizes, from the aristocratic waler which cost two thousand rupees in Calcutta to the pigmy country-bred which wasn't considered a bargain at seventy-five rupees in the neighbouring bazaar. As soon as all are mounted, the owner of the pack, who fills the rôle of master, huntsman, and whip combined, leads his rabble out into the fields.

It is a beautiful cold-weather morning. Save for the fleecy haze which is inseparable from this season in Northern India, there is not a cloud in the sky. The whole arch of heaven is that beautiful deep blue for which those who have left the East may yearn but can never find elsewhere. The sun is not up high enough yet to destroy that bite in the air which is the feature of the Indian winter, and under which the white man is able to recuperate against the furnace of the summer. The hunt turns out into a great open plain of cultivated land,—land that is waiting for the early morning frosts to cease in order that it may receive the seed of the spring sowings. This plain is fringed with little mango-

groves, and far on the left, where the smoke-bred mist hangs heaviest, nestles a tiny village, an occasional white-washed wall and red-tiled roof showing where some wealthier peasant has made his home. But for this village and its attendant palm-trees and groups of broad plantains the scene is hardly Eastern. Presently the fallow-land is left behind, and the hunt passes over crops of sweet-potatoes and winter wheat. Here and there it makes a detour to avoid a patch of maturing tobacco. The villagers are still at work in this plot, carefully scrutinising each broad leaf, searching for the parasites which unremoved may reduce their profits by half their margin. They rise from their work and gravely salute the sahibs, inwardly marvelling what folly can possess sane men that they can find enjoyment in the society of twenty half-wild dogs. Then we are into the village itself, passing between squalid huts with ill-thatched roofs. The women at the wells hastily hide their faces and flee to some shelter from which they can view the passing cavalcade without laying themselves open to the accusation of indelicacy. The little brown children, whose naked figures seem impervious to cold, come trooping to the roadside, and in shrill childish voices try to emulate their elders in the courtesy of salutation.

Half a mile from the village we find the covert which it is hoped will hold the jackal. The foxhounds are loosed from

their leashes, and, with an imitation of the professional formula, the master puts his hounds into covert. But long before he has given the appointed word the fox-terriers and nondescripts were streaming in a long white line towards the tangled grass patch. Almost before the serious elders of the pack could set about their business Master Rip or Mistress Jemima had found their heart's desire. A couple of yaps, and then the "music" is taken up in a dozen different keys. But one of the dog-keepers has viewed the old grey jackal stealing away towards the river-bank. One view-halloo is enough, and then all semblance of the English sport is formally abandoned. It is a case of field, jackal, and pack each for itself and Providence for us all. The great long-striding greyhounds easily take the van, then come the better mounted of the field, followed at intervals by toiling, breathless terriers and deep-throated, mystified foxhounds. But the jackal has heard of greyhounds before. With a twist and a turn just under the bank of the river he sends them off at a tangent, while taking advantage of the tamarisk fringe he follows a line at right angles. In a country where hounds can barely work by scent, it is essential that man should use his head. The huntsman had put jackals out of that very grass before, and experience had taught him the usual manoeuvre they made when they reached the river-

bed. He was prepared for it, and manfully sounding his horn, he conveyed part of his pack by a short cut: he hit off the line truly, and gave his greyhounds another view. The jackal had three hundred yards' advantage, but the greyhounds had seen him, and they bent to the work of catching him. It was then coursing of the best, and though a covert with an earth in it was almost within reach, the leading greyhound rolled him over. He was up again and away. Over he rolled again, and then had another chance. But he turned full into the face of the fleetest of the nondescripts, and was pinned down for ever, to be worried into his next life by a multitude of terriers, who on these occasions prove the busiest sportsmen that ever ran a jackal on sight.

You who are not satisfied unless you have forty minutes of the best in a grass country will be inclined to scoff at our poor attempts at hunting. But then we can have a dozen of these brief moments in a morning, and we are satisfied with the small mead which the country and circumstances will allow us! While the terriers are worrying the carcass, and the foxhounds piteously looking for water, and the man on the seventy-five-rupee pony, who was unfortunate enough to ride into a silver-fox earth, is brushing the soft mud from his coat, an excited villager arrives with the startling intelligence that he has discovered a tiger in a neighbouring patch of tamarisk. We

know well enough that in this highly cultivated country there is the smallest possible chance of a tiger being so far away from the jungles. But as the man is most eloquent in his description and marvellous in the details of the beast, we feel sure that he has seen something. The covert is conveniently close and is consequently drawn. As a sign of his confidence in his own story the villager for the purpose of safety climbs into a babul-tree, and from this point of vantage directs the operations. His directions are not needed long, for out of the thickest portion of the tamarisk bounds a beautiful neilghi.¹ Now here is a run to tax the efforts of the best of sportsmen. For a man who will ride down a neilghi must ride as cunning and as hard as any fellow-sportsman in the Shires!

It was some hours before the whole of the field with the residue of the pack returned to the rendezvous. The majority of the hounds, however, from want of wind and want of length of limb, had long given up the hunt, and found their way back to their temporary kennel. This is a common failing in over-enthusiastic sporting dogs. The want of discipline in a "bobbery" pack is very similar to the lack of the same quality in irregular troops in a long-protracted war; in fact, with-

out being unduly discourteous, we have had many incidents recently forced upon us which find a parallel in the inconsequent behaviour of an Indian scratch hunt.

But even after a wash and brush-up and a big midday tiffin,² the festivities of the Indian Christmas had not been all exhausted. In the afternoon the sahib was prepared to receive the more distinguished of his native visitors, and about half-past four the first of these arrived. He was a very large landowner, and consequently very heavily in debt. The burden of this debt had been recently increased by the preliminary nuptials of a five-year-old daughter, who had been ill-advised and hardy enough not to succumb to the usual measure of infanticide adopted in the case of a superfluity of daughters. So grave had been the expenses incurred in the settling of the *tilak*,³ and so hard were the requests of the various money-lenders consulted, that the poor unfortunate father would fain sell a portion of his property to the sahib. The sahib, after the manner of his kind, and with a cunning bred of a long residence in the East, showed but little inclination to clinch a bargain which had been his prime desire for many years. Consequently there was nothing that the landowner could do that he would consider a trouble, provided that it placed him in a better footing with the white

¹ Blue bull.

² Lunch.

³ Marriage-settlement money paid by the father of the bride to the father of the bridegroom.

taskmaster. This day being Christmas, he selected it as opportune to show the greatest deference. Therefore he had his elephant caparisoned in its very best trapping, and, attended by his mace-bearer and his more influential retainers, he came to visit the sahib armed with a present of gold mohurs. In consideration of the occasion the stout landowner was ushered in amongst the circle of Christmas visitors, and as a special mark of distinction was offered a chair. In trepidation he sat dubiously on the edge, and talked vaguely about the visit of the lieutenant-governor to the district, a visit which had taken place at least five years previously. Having exhausted this topic of conversation, he was as a special favour allowed to visit certain rooms within the bungalow. The silver plate in the dining-room somewhat interested him; also the table, upon which the skeleton of the Christmas dinner to be was already spread, attracted his attention. But, oriental-like, his remarks of approbation or the reverse were few until he saw the billiard-table. Then even oriental gentility could not restrain his admiration. He offered to buy it on the spot, remarking that it was the kind of bed that he had been wanting for years. A

printed price-list of billiard-tables was found in some obscure corner and presented to him. Armed with this he took his leave with all that courtesy for which the high-caste Oriental is famed, and returned to his elephant, we have no doubt thoroughly satisfied with the impression he had made.

The scope of this paper will only allow of reference to one more incident illustrative of the feelings which at this season move the Englishman in exile. The dinner has been served. The dignified sirdar has placed the port and sherry in front of the sahib, and has marshalled the rest of the servants out of the room. In general appearance it is much the same as any other English dinner-table. Men and women are dressed as we see them in the West; the closed doors and the pall of night have hidden away the Indian scenery; and now that the native servants have withdrawn, the moment has arrived for the drinking of a toast which to the exile is the most moving, the most solemn toast of all. The decanters pass, and then the host, calling upon his guests to take wine with him, proposes the "old folks at home." Only those who have been in exile can appreciate the spirit of this toast.

A NORWAY SALMON-RIVER.

BY GILFRID W. HARTLEY.

SOME twenty hours north of Bergen, a river, bred on a great glacier, filtered in a lake, falls into the Nordfjord. Its blue-green waters hurry down in rapids through which it is difficult to follow a fish, over fesses where it is impossible to follow one, and then find out for themselves a quieter course, winding under scrubby wood-banks covered with oak fern, and past meadows where lily of the valley grows literally by the acre. A mile or less from the head of the river, and very close to it, stands a comfortable, even luxurious lodge, built by a Scotsman after the Norwegian fashion entirely of wood. To this lodge there came at the end of June of last year three travellers—a lady, her husband, and her brother.

It is related that it was once asked of an angler, up to his middle in a stream, and plying his craft as he had been daily and hourly plying it for six weeks, if he did not think the scenery around him very beautiful, and how the wader, keeping his eye on that part of the dancing water beneath which his fly worked, replied: "I came to Norway to fish for salmon, not to look at scenery." To a great extent we sympathised with this devotee, for, though it was impossible to live in our valley and not be attracted by its beauty, we never got beyond it, or ex-

plored the great lake above it, or the still greater glacier which lay a little farther to the east. The fine country in the midst of which we did our work exercised no doubt its humanising influence, and of this we were probably always more or less conscious, especially when things went well. But there are times for everything, and it would be but a tactless act to call the attention of a man or a woman to the last sunset glow touching a snowy mountain immediately after he or she had lost a good fish, while, if the fish had been landed, a complete acquiescence might be expected from one quite careless of such natural effects, and really thinking of other things. *We* went to Norway to fish for salmon, and for no other purpose, and set about it in a business-like fashion. And first we divided the river, that portion of it which belonged to us—some eighteen pools—into three beats, and changed them every day. This system is a satisfactory one, for there is then no daily arguing about where you are to fish, nor any favours to be asked or given: you know exactly what you have to do, and can do it at your own time. We could let our pools rest if we thought the evening would be the most propitious, or we could fish them all day, or—without asking any one's leave

or advice—we could get up at unearthly hours in the morning and fish them then. The lady was put at once on terms of perfect equality with the two men: a little later in the month she secured an advantage over us, but this was due to her own energy and enterprise, and not to any grace of ours. She announced carelessly one day at “middag” that she had entered into an arrangement with a farmer who had fishing higher up the river, and had become the “leaseholder” of a certain pool and various small places where salmon sometimes lay, and that, when she did not feel disposed to fish them herself, they were at our service for a consideration. We received this announcement with indifference, pointing out that we had plenty of water, and that she would get back little for her rent; but events will show that her enterprise was rewarded.

We were particularly fortunate in securing the services of three first-class gaffers. In Mr Bromley Davenport’s brilliant description in ‘Sport’ of a fight with an immense fish he exclaims—when the tired creature slipped off the hook and lay for a moment like a log in the shallows, and the man only gazed at it with lack-lustre eyes and made no effort to gaff it—“Oh for a Scotch ghillie!” Other writers, too, on Norway fishing, have referred to the want of smartness shown by their men. We landed, by the help of our three attendants, sixty salmon, averaging nearly 19 lb., besides grilse and sea-

trout, and the mistakes that were made, and the opportunities that were lost, could almost be counted on the fingers of a hand. “I think you have not missed *one* chance,” I said exultingly one day to my gaffer, watching him carefully taking the hook out of a great shapely lice-covered beauty. “Yes,” he replied thoughtfully, pausing for a moment. “I think I did—last Friday—when I fell in the water. But I did not see how slippery was the stone.” That is the only mishap I can remember, and I know my fellow-anglers were equally fortunate. These men, Sivert, Mattias, Muns, were always ready and cool and collected: always, *nearly* always, cheerful. It was this quality of coolness which enabled them to do their work so well: they were never in a hurry or excited. A terrible lesson on the foolishness of being hurried, and the punishment which almost certainly follows it, will be given presently. “All right” was the phrase which fell most frequently from their lips; when you hooked your fish, when, after long trying to keep him in the pool, you had perforce to let him out of it and follow as best you might—when, in spinning from a boat, your line got twisted or hanked, or slipped off the reel, and your agitated fingers made the confusion worse, and their calm ones had to come to your aid. And if, after a hard fight, the honours rested with the salmon, and you suddenly found yourself divorced from him,

little lower down, a wire-rope stretched across it,—our means of communication with the road and civilisation opposite. But it was easy to duck the rod under the hawser, and, somewhat hot and breathless, I arrived with my charge at the next pool. At the top of this pool is a nice backwater, where many salmon have been gaffed, and I hoped to make a stand here. But the salmon would have none of the gaffing-place; the heavy water (and another circumstance we found out later) drove him on: he hardly rested at all in this second pool, and in spite of all I could do, and all the strain I could put on him with a heavy eighteen-foot-six rod, he went rolling and tumbling down it, and into still stronger water below. Here again was a strange country, always more alarming than one well known; steep banks, on which a slip would probably mean the loss of the fish, and more trees to avoid.

Sivert followed on the bank above, always ready to give a helping hand on shoulder or arm in a bad place, with an encouraging "All right!" when the little obstacle was passed. By this time the fisherman was as hot as, or hotter than, he had ever been in his life; wet far above his waders, and breathless and tired of the heavy continuous strain. Some hundred yards farther down was a grassy ness or point, and it was necessary to get the fish in here, for immediately below it was an ugly burn full of trees almost impossible to pass, and below

this again a final obstacle in the shape of a low wooden bridge. So I gave the rod to Sivert: it had formed a good arc all this time, and now became almost a circle. But still the fish went on. He could not stop it, and we felt sure that our capture—so far indeed our captor—was foul-hooked. Just above the ness Sivert put on a tremendous strain, and got the salmon in towards the bank. The light was bad—that was my only excuse—there was a queer grey shimmer on the water, which made it difficult to see anything below. But it was a poor excuse. I could have taken more time. I gaffed the fish, lifted him up, and saw with great consternation that the hold was a very thin one at the top of the back, and that except for a miracle it must give. I turned towards the shore, conscious that the fly was in the back too; tried to get my left arm under the salmon to lighten the strain, with the idea of kicking him, hustling him ashore somehow if it broke (the affair was one of seconds really, though to the chief actor it seemed one of minutes). The hold did break, and the next moment the salmon was thirty yards out in the stream again, but still on. In spite of such a blunder he might yet be ours. Then Sivert said "Holloa!" and began winding up and winding up a fly only, not a fish; the fish was gone.

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salmon, often lobsters, sometimes an omelette. Then a cigar, and bedtime was any time up to two A.M.

Many people would shudder at the very idea of such a commissariat, and the unwonted hours, but both soon became quite natural to us. Our menu was in reality most luxurious: everything we had to eat was beautifully and most daintily cooked. Each one of the soups tasted better than its predecessor, and was surpassed by that which followed. There were always delicious ices and puddings, and the most delicately flavoured and crispest of biscuits. A cold mutton-chop sounds anything but an appetising comestible to dine off at midnight, but our chops were unlike any others in their savouriness and freedom from the slightest suspicion of grease. To Anne Svärstad, the presiding genius of the household, the grateful thanks of the three fisher-people were due; and we were also much indebted to her lieutenants—to "Little Anne," a strapping damsel belying the diminutive, and to Ingeborg, whose name called up associations with Fridjof's Saga.

The first night was close and sultry, and we did nothing: none of us moved a fish. The next day was hot and bright, and we sat in the shade, reading week-old London papers: watching the white foss on the hillside opposite grow whiter as the day crept on; and wondering—if this was to continue for a week or two, this blazing sun and melting snow—what was to become of three honest anglers who had come so far?

Sight-seeing and picnics might, after all, be our fate. At half-past eight the sun went behind the mountain, and for the first time that day the water lay in shadow. Then we separated.

"I think this pool is rather too high," said Sivert, putting on a big Durham Ranger after looking at the heavy swirling water below the "platform." Muns, my man, was off duty that night, so the lady and I shared the services of the first-named accomplished fisherman. The top of the pool was plainly too big; there were only a few yards at its tail worth fishing, and here I hooked a salmon. Very early on he began to give trouble; he made three or four furious rushes out into the pool, and soon began to cause uneasy apprehensions in the breast of the man attached to him. He would run out thirty yards of line, and I could only get twenty back; fifty yards, and I could only reel in thirty; eighty yards, and I could reel in nothing, and had, moreover, to get hurriedly off the gangway and run away down the bank, giving instead of taking, and travelling, not at the easy and comfortable pace at which it is delightful to follow a fish when you know you *can* follow him, but as hard as I could go. Twelve months earlier and hopes and fears would soon have been set at rest, because then it was impossible to go down for more than a couple of hundred yards, owing to the trees and bushes. The worst of these had now been cut, and there were no immediate obstacles, except a possibly awkward rock in the river, and, a

little lower down, a wire-rope stretched across it,—our means of communication with the road and civilisation opposite. But it was easy to duck the rod under the hawser, and, somewhat hot and breathless, I arrived with my charge at the next pool. At the top of this pool is a nice backwater, where many salmon have been gaffed, and I hoped to make a stand here. But the salmon would have none of the gaffing-place; the heavy water (and another circumstance we found out later) drove him on: he hardly rested at all in this second pool, and in spite of all I could do, and all the strain I could put on him with a heavy eighteen-foot-six rod, he went rolling and tumbling down it, and into still stronger water below. Here again was a strange country, always more alarming than one well known; steep banks, on which a slip would probably mean the loss of the fish, and more trees to avoid.

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should have got the fish. Here was cause to pitch into the maker of it and all his ancestors. But the great blunder was mine. It cannot very often happen that a fish gets off after being so nearly landed as to deposit one of his scales on the face of the gaffsman; but such was the memento he left me after my handling of him. "I do not care," said Sivert; "he was not very big." Some two weeks earlier Sivert had landed for a man on that river six fish *averaging* 35 lb., so he spoke truly in saying the lost one was not very big. But I cared very much indeed: to lose a fish of nearer 30 than 20 lb. through bad gaffing was not a matter to be got over in a few minutes. However, as a man gets older he learns, or ought to learn, to take a more philosophical view of misfortunes than was possible in his hot youth. Such will come if he fishes much: if he fishes little, still they will sometimes come, and be the more felt. A hearty consignment to the ill one of everything connected with the accident gives only very momentary relief; and then the thought may arise in the fisherman's bosom that perhaps if he had been more patient, when weighed down by the last catastrophe, he might be the more fortunate now. It is easy to imagine that the goddess who presides over sport may be shocked at the blast of vituperation which so often assails her pretty ears, and possibly finds it as easy as pleasant to make the care-

less utterer suffer for it by-and-by.

We went sadly back to the "platform," where the lady pricked one fish with spoon, and I treated another in the same way with prawn, and then we went home. My brother-in-law W. saw nothing.

Sunset the next day found me at the same pool still sore but expectant: the two others were on the lower beats. In the same part of the tail, but fishing with prawn instead of fly, I hooked a salmon, which after a few preliminary flourishes bolted out into the middle of the strong stream, and then went headlong down the river. Again I got over the wading-stockings; again I had to lower the rod under the wire-rope, but this time the fly was in the mouth instead of in the back, and I soon got him into the backwater, where Muns gaffed him. He weighed just 20 lb., and was quite clean run, as nearly all our fish were. I went back to the "platform" and got hold of another, which, without the least hesitation, took the same road the others had done, and made off towards the sea.

As I followed this fish—this third fish—down the river, over the now well-known country, racing down the bank where it was open, and keeping pace with him; losing ground a little where the steep bank and trees were, watching the line rigidly cutting the water far away out, I began to think to myself, "What sort of a specimen of humanity will you be like if every fish you get hold

of during the next month behaves as these?" If the river had remained at its then height most of the fish hooked in that and many other pools would have played the same pranks, and given very anxious times to those who had to do with them. But as it fell, so to a certain extent did their turbulent spirits, and fixed determination to reach the sea.

I landed the fish—a 17-pounder—in the backwater below the lodge, and then secured a 14-pounder, and then an 11-pounder: the latter two I was able to treat more summarily, and bring to the bank in their own pool. A 14-pounder is a small fish for this river, and an 11-pounder a very small one. We carried off our prizes, and laid them out symmetrically on the lawn in front of the lodge, and then, about midnight, I strolled contentedly down the river to see what luck or what mischance had befallen my friends.

Presently I met them: the lady and her brother were carrying three fish, a 15-pounder, a grilse, and a sea-trout weighing $8\frac{1}{2}$ lb., all the spoil of the former,—not a bad night's work, one would say, for any rod. But "Oh!" she cried, "he's got a monster—a monster!" and certainly he had. It soon appeared strapped on a gaff, borne by the two other men,—a splendid fish weighing 41 lb. It appeared that W. had first lost his tackle in a root, broken his rod when fishing a place made awkward by a high bank behind, and then, in a shocking humour probably, and quite forgetful

of the fact that on a previous visit to the river two accidents of the same kind had been the forerunner of a great piece of luck in the shape of the best fish of the season, had borrowed the lady's rod after she had stopped fishing, and just taken that "last cast or two" which so often brings a great reward.

Big fish do not always give the most trouble, but they cause the most anxiety. Once when playing a salmon on the same river W. smashed his rod, and though sorely handicapped, managed to land it—a 42-pounder. Another time his Malloch got out of order, and it took two men to work it, and prevent it overrunning and the line slipping off the drum; and still the fish—one of 28 lb.—was got ashore. As he said, this last salmon—this 41-pounder—might have done anything and gone anywhere, for he was firmly on, and the bank was open for a mile. But it is generally your fish hooked at the top of a waterfall or difficult rapid who swaggers and shakes himself, and hastily goes down impossible places.

After supper my companions retired to their beds: the night was clear and fine, so I waited till daylight was a little nearer, and beginning at two, fished the pool in front of the lodge and the faithful "platform." I got another 14-pounder in the first with fly, and lost a good fish; landed an 11-pounder at the "platform" with spoon, and then broke the spinning-reel: if it had not been for this misfortune, probably my sport would not have ended then. We tried coiling the line and

casting, but it was too fine to do this well, and twisting and kinking was often the result. I got tired of the work and let Sivert try, and it was with some grim sort of satisfaction that I saw him get hold of a good fish and at once have to run for his life off the "platform" and after it down the river. I followed him, like a gentleman this time, comfortably picking my way through the wet grass instead of stumbling along the steep bank. But this one got away after a few minutes' fierce run, and then the sun blazed suddenly down on the river, and we went to our neglected beds.

Great naturally was our satisfaction at this night's work—eight fish averaging 18 lb., and a fine sea-trout, to say nothing of the grilse: we were jubilant, and the accident of the previous day began to be blotted out from my mind. Yet not altogether: you can never, really, quite overtake such a loss. It is right and pleasant to put on record that we were indebted for the fish we got in the last three days of June to the great courtesy of the gentleman from whom we took the river, for our occupation of it did not begin properly till the first day of July.

During the first week or two of our stay parts of the steep hill opposite the lodge were a blaze of colour—harebells and pansies growing together in dense masses of blue and mauve and violet. One morning we awoke up to find that most of the splendid colouring had departed, and the smoothest and most shaven of turf had

taken its place. A sign of the extreme lateness and coldness of the season was the state of the hay crop—the worst known in the memory of any one in the valley. The farms are very small; half-a-dozen cows and some sixteen to twenty sheep seemed rather over than under the average stock. The sheep had to be brought in early in October, and fed under cover till May, so it was not easy to see how they could be of much profit, even though their hay was eked out by birch branches cut green and dried. In this valley for some months in the winter the sun never makes his appearance; all agricultural operations are at a standstill, and the short daylight is chiefly occupied in dealing in different ways with wood,—felling it, sliding it down the hillside, sledging it down the valley, and then cutting it up. So to make up for their long-enforced idleness, the people in the summer worked early and late. "Too hard, I think," my gaffer used to say, when, coming back weary to the lodge about midnight, we saw them hanging about their doorways, just in from the field. The hay was their main crop: oats were grown in small quantities, and potatoes in patches here and there, but on the hay was their chief reliance, and to secure it they worked at certain times almost day and night. Sweet natural grass it must be always, in spite of the gay flowers, but in quantity it was this year most disappointing. A sturdy north-country mower of the old school, born in days before

machines were heard of in the land, proud of being able to cut an acre of heavy ryegrass in a given time for a wager, would have been completely set at sea here, and not have known where to begin, or how to use the tools with which these folk did their work. Here was no waste, no material left to wither which by any means could be turned into food: with their queer little scythes they cut into every cranny among the rocks and trees,—no hollow was so awkward or difficult to get at as to baffle them. With almost pathetic industry they shaved the mountain-side, and after they had been at their harvest for some time, to walk over it was like walking over the pleasure-grounds of some rich and fastidiously tidy landowner: the trees and bushes stood up out of what looked like well-kept lawns. The English mower, proud of the broad sweep of his heavy scythe, would have stared at the bundles of queer-shaped instruments which these Norwegian farmers carried about. It was a common thing to see a man with any number up to ten under his arm, their blades set at different angles so as best to grapple with the grass, however well protected it might be by stones or roots. We found out now why the lily of the valley, which grew so abundantly here,—not in clumps or patches, but in many-acred masses,—flowered so badly. Its turn came to be mowed; its promise of white fragrance did nothing to save it from the hay-stack. We came

across it in late bloom here and there, in some chink or cranny by the river where it grew quite alone, and so escaped the sharp knives of the haymakers, or wedged in between the roots of alder-bushes where it could not be got at without more trouble than it was worth. But difficulty of getting at it did not always save a flower. There was a tall plant of *Lysimachia vulgaris*(?) growing by itself in a chink of the rock opposite to the lodge. One afternoon the lady saw an old woman, who had been raking her hay-shavings on the bank above, cautiously climb down to the flower and cut it, and carry it off in triumph—a meagre and, one would think, useless contribution to her store. The hay here was always dried on hurdles instead of on the ground; but this year the grass was often too short to stick on to them, and lay like clippings of ill-kept lawns below.

A mile or less above the lodge, and just after the river had left the lake, was a wide and very rocky pool. It was a useless place in high water; in medium water there was a short bit well worth fishing. It was not a very difficult matter to hook a salmon here, but then only the smallest part of your work was done. First, it was necessary to wade out some way and stand in a strong stream on a very uneven bottom to cast. Up comes the fish, and then you had to get ashore and hold him. Below there was a wild chaos of broken and furiously running water, and though it

was not altogether an impossibility to go down, deep wading across a branch of the river was necessary, and before you struggled over this you were fortunate if all your line, however long it might be, was not run out. I forget the proportion of fish which, allowed to go down, were gaffed, but it was a very small one. So it was always considered wisest to hold the salmon by main force in the pool. Then if he was well hooked, very well hooked, and there was no flaw of any kind in your tackle, you might get him. It was no use coming here with weak tackle. The strongest treble gut was always used, and the tension of the reel made so stiff that only with a very considerable strain could the line be taken out at all. Of course a lightly hooked fish gave no trouble or anxiety—he got off at once. This was the most important part in the lady's "take." The first day she came into possession of it a local angler also had the right, and she reached it just in time to be too late; to see far off the shimmer of a well-bent rod, and find him hotly engaged with a fish of not less than 30 lb. The man knew his business, and the place he was in, and if his tackle had been as good as his hold in the salmon's mouth he would have come out of it the winner. For twenty minutes the fight went on; his inexperienced gaffer was already making feeble and ineffectual pokes at the frightened fish, but at last an extra strong run, as strongly checked, found out a weak place in the reel-line and broke it. The lady got a grilse here that

afternoon, the first reward of her enterprise, and the next day an 18-pounder in a small cast a little lower down. A very few minutes ended this struggle: the fish was held tight and gaffed before he was half done. If following a fish from the pool just mentioned was a very hopeless business, from this other it was an impossibility. A wild fresh-run 18-lb. salmon in any strong water is a troublesome customer, but when you have to keep him in a space not bigger than a medium-sized drawing-room,—when you know that if he gets one yard out of this space it can be only a question of seconds before something goes,—you have at once a fierce interest added to your fight which is wanting in quieter waters. It was folly to use anything in these pools about which you could not be certain, and for my part, before going out, I destroyed or gave away every old fly I had and every bit of gut, however good and strong it seemed. There was another place in which you sometimes had to hold by main force any fish which wanted to go out of it: this was a long, wide, deep, evenly running stream at the top of a high rough foss. When the water was big, salmon often tried to go down here, not so much when they were first hooked as when they became tired, and when your hopes were high of getting him. After following him two or three times perhaps to the very edge of the foss, and laboriously working him eighty or a hundred yards up again, the creature would struggle out into the middle of the stream and go

walloping down, as much by his own weight as anything, and get into the swiftly running water at the tail. Then if he went a yard too far he was over it, and you would be left with your 180 yards of line out before you knew what you were doing. I got my best fish, a 32-pounder, in this place, with fly, and the way in which he several times explored the top of that waterfall brought my heart into my mouth. The capture of the 18-pounder in such a place was a feather in the lady's cap: her pools increased in value in the eyes of the other two, and permission to fish them was sought for more humbly than had been the case at first. A day or two later she hooked and played for five minutes a much heavier fish in a similar hole, and then the hold in his mouth broke.

W. had paid two visits to our river, and knew how to spin with spoon and prawn: we others had to learn the work, as an hour or two's practice on Duddingston Loch under the tutelage of Messrs Hardy's Edinburgh manager was all we had to rely upon. There we learnt how to get out a reasonable distance with the "Silex." It is much to be desired that a reel could be manufactured which would combine the advantages of the Silex with that of a "Malloch." To use the first—I write now for novices in spinning, such as we were—you have to turn your back on the place where you wish to deposit your bait: then, if you have room behind you for a proper swing, you can, I think, get out a longer

line than with the Perth reel. But if you are standing up in a boat in a swirling stream, or where there is a steep bank rising immediately behind you, this is very difficult to do, and the Malloch is the best. But again, when a fish is on, you have to keep a sharp eye on the Malloch lest the line slips off the drum, and the "Silex" works like an ordinary reel. Both are clever inventions; a combination of their good qualities would make perfection.

Prawn and spoon, spinning for salmon in any fashion, are by some anglers tabooed. For my part, I have fished for many years a good river—or what used, alas! to be a good river—and killed salmon up to 40 lb. without ever having learnt their use, not liking to harass water which other men on other days tried only with fly. Some indeed say that spinning does not disturb fish: the salmon must be the judge. The splash of a prawn or a couple of prawns and three heavy bits of lead sent out thirty or forty or fifty yards from the bank; the rolling of the bait along or near the bottom; the constant catching hold of stones, and the tugging and working to get free,—these can hardly have a soothing effect on any but the most nerveless fish. And it is difficult to see how the frantic swishing up and down of a long line with a three- or four-inch spoon at the end of it, also with its due accompaniment of lead, can be conducive to that quietness of mind and freedom from disturbance which is supposed to put salmon in a good humour.

We had of course no scruples about spinning here; the water was all our own; there was no one on the opposite bank, and none of that jealous racing and manœuvring to get to a favourite bit of water which in some places makes salmon-fishing more an irritating exercise than a pleasure. But we had to learn our trade; the lesson on the quiet loch had to be very much supplemented by experience on the river. Whether to strike a fish at once, when he rises at a fly, will probably be a subject of debate amongst some people till the crack of Doom. The *natural* impulse, at any rate, is to strike when you see a rise. But when, after throwing the prawn, you felt a tug, it was also natural to strike, and extremely difficult for a beginner to keep himself from doing it, and here it was clearly wrong, for you nearly always dragged the bait away from the fish. "When you feel him come," Sivert used to say (he was a first-class performer with the rod, as were also Muns and Mattias), "drop the point of the rod, let him have it—and then give a *regular good strike*." A book could not have said more; the advice was admirable. But it was very difficult sometimes to carry it out. At first the leads, bumping along the bottom, sent a movement up the line to the fingers very similar to that caused by a fish. I lost a good many by forgetting all instructions and striking hard at the first tug. Then you either settled the matter at once by jerking the bait away, or, if the fish was

hooked, he was badly hooked, and soon got off. "Let him have it" meant some slack line. I used to keep a yard or two loose, to let go when the first tug came, and as often as not held it tight just at the wrong moment. How in those rough-bottomed swirling pools the leads and hooks, cast out a great distance from the bank, at right angles to it, or even a little up, ever managed to swing round without hanking up, was a thing I never could understand. Considering all things, especially our inexperience, it was wonderful how little tackle we lost. One day the lady, who I believe rose as many fish as both her companions together, came home with two fish from the lower beat: instead of being all smiles she was in a shockingly ruffled temper. She had had to do with five more on prawn, and one—a very large one—on spoon, and had lost them all. She did not that night "let them have it" properly. In cases of this kind the less said by sympathetic friends the better. Consolation has to be diplomatically administered, or it is best let alone altogether; ordinary commonplaces are more likely to be received with contemptuous indignation than with gratitude. It is not too much to say that the words which haunted us most—were most often in our minds when fishing with prawn—were, "Let him have it, and then give a *regular good strike*." How often we inverted the order and gave the good strike first!

On the second day of our fishing my brother-in-law, as

has been related, came home with a 41-lb. fish. On the third day he appeared with a 43-pounder; on the fourth day he was contented with a 30-pounder. Now our heaviest at that date was 20 lb., and there seemed to be a want of proportion in the business, an almost indelicate exuberance of poundage. If this had gone on for a week, it is difficult to believe that our congratulations would have been as sincere on the seventh day as they were on the first three; if it had continued for a fortnight, whether friendship itself would have been able to bear the strain. There might then have been something of a hollow ring in the praises given; disagreeable inquiries as to whether any big fish had been got in the trap that morning, and taken to the ice-house; furtive examination of the captured one's mouth to see if he bore about him signs of the strain of conflict. We only got five fish up to and over 30 lb., and it was curious that three of these should have been taken by one rod in the first three days.

There were several salmon-traps on the river, interesting, but to us unpleasing, objects. One on the low beat did no harm, so far as lessening the stock of salmon went, for not a single fish was got in it during our stay. Old Eric—a picturesque-looking well-to-do farmer—used to go out to it and poke patiently into its inmost recesses with an enormous gaff in vain. But the position of the trap and its fortifications, stretching far out into the

river, caused a sad jumbling and swirling in the fine water below, and almost destroyed what had been a most productive pool for the rod. Here, however, W. got one of his big fish.

But it was quite otherwise with another trap above the foss which fell into the "platform" pool. This was well placed and caught a good many fish, and so early in our stay we discussed the advisability of buying it up for the month. The wise Norwegian weekly close-time is a more liberal one than ours, from 6 P.M. on Friday to the same time on Monday,—three days instead of our short-sighted thirty-six hours. How much, then, would it be worth while to give for the other four days? The farmers to whom it belonged by right of their land were willing to let; they had got 500 kroner—some £28—for it once before, and, though they felt sure they could make far more by working it, would be willing, &c. We thought this too much, and negotiations were entered into, which were carried on for a fortnight and then dropped, and we never got possession, so whether it would have been to our interest to pay such a sum for it can never be known. When fishing the swiftly running deep bit of water above the foss we used to see a man come three or four times a-day, walk out on a plank over the roaring water, and carefully examine the well-guarded prison in which a salmon, taking the wrong road up the fall, found himself. We felt a little bit of selfish gratification when after

long poking and peering he went back to the shore fishless. But as often as not, after careful examination, there would be a quick strike with the gaff, and up one would come, which was at once laid flat on a board and carried off on the man's shoulders to the ice-house. Once we saw a 45-lb. salmon so wending his way there. At such times it was something of a consolation to us to hear that the capture was well marked in the mouth by long struggling with a big hook, and therefore would not have been inclined to pay any attention to us during our month. He might have been lost by some angler before we came. But then he *might* have been lost by one of us; one of us three might have had to do with him, and so it was always with mixed feelings that we listened to these tales. "Three fish in the trap this morning; smallest 27 lb."—only they put it in kilogrammes—Muns would announce when he came to valet me. Then it was, "Why did we not rent the place!" or "Nothing for two days!"—and we congratulated ourselves on our thrift.

As the river got smaller, owing to the cold weather, the play of the fish naturally became a little less brilliant and exciting, but they were a game race, and always made a good fight for their lives. If it had remained at its first high level there would have been almost daily accounts of disasters to tell of when smoking last cigars over the wood-fire at night—or rather in the morning: of fish that *would* go out of pools where they could not be fol-

lowed, and consequent breakages of something: as it was, we lost but a few in this way. The lady had perhaps the hardest bit of luck—a very heavy fish, well hooked and nearly beaten, getting off at last by smashing, not the hook but the *ring* of the great spoon he was tugging at. The next one she had to do with was a 24-pounder, and naturally her confidence in her instrument of destruction was shaken, but this time all went well. She finished her work with a 19-pounder, and then just before leaving her brother made up the long tale of sixty salmon with a fish 3 lb. less. The latter had one rather exciting run in which he came out a loser. Probably every one who has fished much knows what it is to hook a dog. If it is a big dog, and a good runner, and caught in a tender place, and the day is warm and the country for half a mile or so round about is an open one, you may in this way enjoy more exercise than you would get with even a very large salmon. Then a considerable amount of diplomacy is required to get the fly out. Our companion hooked a neighbour's dog, and had a merry run with it. The dog took refuge in a wood, and when he and his gaffer got on terms with it, neither of them cared to undertake the delicate work of extraction, so the creature was sent home with a good-sized Jock Scott in his flank, which had to be cut out the next day by the local veterinary surgeon at a charge of three kroner. After this the dog was

seldom seen playing on the lawn where so heavy a visitation had been meted out to him.

None of our water was suitable for harling, but nearly all the pools were too wide to cover from the bank. Some you fished first from the bank, and then your gaffer, standing on the shore, worked you skilfully out in a boat—of which we had seven or eight—by stem and stern ropes. After this was done there was often a bit to finish from the other side. Above the big foss the ropes were renewed every year. To go over one or two places would have meant almost certain drowning, but there was little possibility of both ropes breaking at the same time. The men were very clever with these skiffs, taking advantage of every bit of backwater when going up, running the strong streams at just the right angle, and working them over stones or a wet bit of meadow in a wonderful way. To stand up in the cockly boats in the rough swirling water was at first rather nervous work, but we soon got not to mind it. Most of the pools had English names, and these were used, though the Norwegian ones are much more musical: “Laxigar” and “Kirkeide” sound

better than “platform” or “bank”. or “Cowans.” But the fashion holds in Scotland also: every pool on a Highland river has its significant Gaelic word, but we get as a rule only the translation of it.

One day our quiet valley was turned into a battlefield; some 2000 men who were encamped on the shore of the fiord, after a morning's manœuvring, made an attack on the mountain opposite, and the haymakers carried on their work to the accompaniment of close and heavy rifle-fire. The general commanding the Bergen district was at the head of affairs, and we entertained him and his aide-de-camp to lunch. When, a fortnight later, our steamer arrived at Bergen, the first man who came on board was the general, with a kind invitation for us. And we shall long remember our evening in the beautiful historical old house on the quay, the dinner and the roses, and above all the charming ladies who gave us so courteous a welcome. It was with many wavings of hats and handkerchiefs that at ten o'clock we steamed out of Bergen harbour for England. And so our last thoughts of Norway were not of salmon after all.¹

¹ The weights of the salmon may be of interest: they were very honestly taken. A fish over 20 lb. and under 20½ lb. was called 20 lb.; over 20½ lb. it was called 21 lb.: our gaffers caught five; no fish hooked by them was credited to us. Almost exactly half were caught with fly: 43, 41, 34, 32, 30, 28, 27, 26, 26, 26, 24, 22, 22, 21, 20, 20, 20, 20, 19, 19, 19, 19, 19, 19, 19, 18, 18, 18, 18, 17, 17, 17, 17, 16, 16, 16, 15, 15, 14, 14, 14, 14, 14, 14, 14, 13, 13, 12, 12, 12, 12, 11, 11, 11, 11, 9, 9, 8. The average was spoilt by so many small fish. The grilse ran from 4 to 7 lb. The largest sea-trout was 8½ lb.

SOME EXPERIMENTS AND A PARADOX.

WHEN one steps on a stretch of sand left smooth and wet by the receding tide, all round one's foot the sand becomes light in colour and dry. When the foot is raised there is a puddle of water left in its place. The facts are so familiar that nobody thinks of inquiring why it is so; every one knows that that is how sand and water naturally do behave. If any one gave it a second thought, a holiday mood might lightly dispose of the question: the sand all round goes dry because the water is squeezed out of it by the pressure of the foot; and the puddle is left—well, because the sand is pressed down and leaves a hole for the water to run into. A little consideration will show that this will not do; some other explanation must be devised, and when it is found you have, says Professor Osborne Reynolds, found nothing less than the clue to the mechanism of the universe, the key to unlock all the mysteries that have been hidden until now,—what is the nature of space; how it transmits heat and light and electric waves; how it is brought about that masses attract one another; and why the ultimate particles of a body bind themselves together to give it strength and coherence.

It is a tremendous claim to make, and it was made in the oddest and most delightful way. In among the crowd of frivolities that go to make up the

Cambridge May Week there is sandwiched the solemnity of the Rede Lecture, delivered each year by some eminent man appointed by the Vice-Chancellor. The Rede lecturer for 1902 was Professor Osborne Reynolds; his subject, "On an Inversion of Ideas as to the Structure of the Universe." On the 10th of June the Senate-House was half-filled with heads of houses and less august seniors with their wives, with undergraduates and sisters and cousins, taking a reconstruction of the universe with the boat-races and balls, as all part of the May Week fun. The lecture was profoundly unintelligible, but there were experiments,—miracles they seemed at the time, "paradoxical, not to say magical."

"I have in my hand," said the professor, "the first experimental model universe, a soft indiarubber bag with a small aperture to admit of its being filled with small shot, which aperture is partly closed, sufficiently to prevent the shot from coming out, by a glass tube." The model universe was filled up with water in between the shot; the shot were shaken down tight till the indiarubber ball was full, and the water stood nearly at the top of the tube. Then the ball was squeezed in the hand. The water did not overflow, as might have been expected; it did not even continue to stand

at the same level, but it sank steadily down the tube as the pressure was increased until it had all been drawn into the ball. And this was not a conjuring trick, but an honest experiment!

It was repeated on a larger scale. The soft rubber bladder of a football was filled with sand and water and connected up to a pressure-gauge and a tall jar of water. The taps were turned off and the bag squeezed in a strong press. It had become as rigid as steel. The tap leading to the gauge was turned on, the bag suddenly changed its shape, and the gauge showed that the strong pressure had created a partial vacuum. There was no tendency at all for the water in between the sand to squeeze out; on the contrary, the stronger the pressure the stronger the suction inwards; and when the way leading to the jar of water was opened, at least a pint was drawn in against a pressure on the sides of the elastic bag of some hundreds of pounds.

It was really a very odd experience, sitting in the familiar Senate-House, and seeing miracles done with these very commonplace materials, sand and water and indiarubber balls. Every now and then one caught a gleam of light in the darkest places of the lecture. The research had occupied twenty years, and had now revealed the *prime cause* of the physical properties of matter. The results are of marvellous simplicity, but so

contrary to previous conceptions as to entail an inversion of ideas hitherto advanced. Empty space is made of close-packed grains ten thousand times as dense as water; matter is of the nature of a thinning out of the space-grains, a partial vacuity, bounded by "a singular surface"—a wave. We are all waves! And then we were lost again in a tangle of single sentences summing up whole reams of mathematics, negative inequalities which attract, and positive inequalities which repel one another, and complex inequalities which are electricity.

There was another experiment. A thin rubber toy balloon was filled with sand and water and its mouth tied up. It was squeezed flat to the shape of a Dutch cheese, and burst in the process. Another was produced, and that burst; so there was no strength to spare in the skin that confined the wet sand. A third bag was flattened successfully and stood up on its edge. To pressure on either side it was soft and pulpy; but when a board was balanced across the top and weights of a couple of hundredweight or more were piled on it, the bag that had been soft in one direction was rigid in the other, and stood hard and firm as a rock. This was the end. These experiments, said the lecturer, performed as long ago as 1885,—some of them were shown to the British Association at Aberdeen in that year,—suggested the idea of the granu-

lar nature of space, and were recognised as an obvious clue to gravitation. Since that year a mathematical theory has been worked out which, with this idea as a basis, accounts entirely for all known properties of matter and of the ether which is supposed to fill space. "And thus we may have the fullest confidence that the structure is purely mechanical, and that ideas, such as I have endeavoured to sketch, will ultimately prevail, displacing for ever such metaphysical conceptions as that of action at a distance, and accomplishing that ideal which, from the time of Thales and Plato, has excited the highest philosophical interest."

We came away vastly impressed. If Osborne Reynolds were right he would be counted in the future a greater than Newton, and we had been present on a great occasion. But is he right? No one could tell, for the proof lies in the mathematics which is yet unpublished,—hundreds of pages, probably, of the most difficult stuff that was ever conceived,—that will carry conviction slowly to a few profound people, if it carries conviction at all. For the rest of us, we shall have to wait for their verdict. We ought to wait. But there was one at least of the audience who went home and constructed a model universe for himself; and when he found with surprise that the

miracle worked in his own garden, and could be performed after dinner over the wine, for him there was no longer any question about it. The way that the universe is worked had been discovered.

For a few months it was a delight to work the model; make the water sink in the tube when the ball was squeezed; and argue with botanists and suchlike people who propounded all sorts of cock-and-bull explanations of the immortal experiment. But the other day the lecture was published,¹ and the spell of the miracle vanished. The explanation was found in a property of matter that is equally true whether the universe is inverted or not. Moreover, it is perfectly easy to understand—perfectly obvious when it is pointed out, and yet has been hardly so much as recognised. It is something like this. We may imagine a layer of hard balls, all of the same size, packed upon a table as close as they will stand, and another layer packed on top of them. In the ordinary course of things each ball of the upper layer would settle down partly between those balls of the lower. But if a suitable constraint were applied all round the boundary of the upper layer it could be made to stand, each ball exactly over a corresponding ball of the lower layer, and in that arrangement the same quantity

¹ On an Inversion of Ideas as to the Structure of the Universe. By Osborne Reynolds, M.A., F.R.S., Professor of Engineering in the Owens College, Manchester. Cambridge, at the University Press, 1902. Price 1s. 6d.

of balls would occupy a greater space. Translated into more general terms, it comes to this—that if we have a pile of hard spherical balls, by suitably squeezing the boundaries of the pile we can make it grow bigger. If the balls are packed as closely as possible to begin with, any squeezing whatever at the boundary tends to make the pile expand; and therein lies the reason of the experiments. Shot and sand are, roughly speaking, hard spherical balls, more or less of the same size. Pack them tight in an elastic bag with water, tie up the bag, and squeeze it. The arrangement of shot tries to grow larger, and wants more water to fill up the spaces between. So long as the bag is closed and no water can get in, the change of shape cannot take place without causing a vacuum, and the pressure of the air outside prevents that. But open the way into a jar of water, and the pressure of the air outside is taken off. The arrangement of shot can then expand and suck in water. Hence the working of the “model universe,” which looks so extraordinary when one first sees it.

And hence comes the explanation of the footprint on the sand, which started us on the subject. The wet sand is packed close and filled up to the surface with water, like a sponge. When one treads on it, the pressure of the foot makes the arrangement of sand grains expand, and they want more water to fill up the interspaces. They draw it from

the nearest source, the unstrained sand all round, which for a minute, till it can suck up more water from below, runs dry. When the foot is raised the strain is taken off the sand below, and it goes back to its old arrangement. There is then an excess of water, which comes out by the quickest way at the top, and makes the puddle.

There remains the case of the soft bag, squeezed flat and stood on edge, which supported a great weight without flinching. This too can be explained, though the explanation is not at first very easy to follow. The secret of it is that, when the bag is tied up, rather more water is left in it than is wanted to fill up between the grains when they are packed their closest. And while the bag is being squeezed flat it is kept shaken, so that the sand is not expanded under the strain but remains at its densest, and there is always a little water to spare up to this point. When the flat round cake enclosed in its indiarubber skin is taken out from between the boards which pressed it flat, the elastic skin tries to regain its spherical shape, produces strain along the breadth of the cake, expands the sand inside until all the spare water is absorbed, and then it can go no farther. Squeezing the sides tends to undo the effect of this last action and compress the sand again. There is no resistance to this at first, and the bag feels soft and pulpy. But a strain in the other direction, along the breadth of the cake,

tends to continue the expansion which the elasticity of the bag carried on until all the water was used up in filling the interspaces. Further than this one cannot go without making a vacuum, which the pressure of the air outside prevents, up to a certain point. So that when the bag is set on edge and a board is laid across it, weights can be piled up on the board to a surprising total, and the bag does not budge. The explanation here is rather hard to follow, but thinking it over a few times will help, and doing the experiment is better. There is something altogether fascinating in doing these things for oneself,—they want so little preparation and such simple materials, and the results are so seemingly paradoxical.

We have it on the authority of the man who devised them that they give an "obvious clue" to the structure of the universe! Doubtless many people before Newton's time found delight in shaking apple-trees, and watching the apples fall, but somehow it escaped their notice that the fall of an apple is an obvious clue to the law of universal gravitation. So may we—all of us who are not profound geniuses—be pardoned if we fail altogether to understand how this tendency of an arrangement of grains to expand under pressure is any help towards clearing up all the mysteries that puzzle us when we begin to ask ourselves how gravitation and other things really work. Space may be granular and very dense;

all that we know as solid matter may be a thinning out of the dense space; from these startling inversions of our ideas it may be possible to build up a mathematical theory that will account for everything; but it does not follow that we should ever really conceive how the thing is worked,—it does not follow, indeed, that we need ever have, even in our minds, a picture of the arrangement as a working model, before we can be convinced of its truth. Mathematics has in a case like this an extraordinary power. The curious experiments which we have described might suggest to a mathematician, What would happen if space had this peculiar property of expanding under strain? He would express the property in what Clerk-Maxwell called "the tenuity and paleness of a symbolical expression," and deduce purely mathematically, and without any further appeal to experiment, what would be the effect of his hypothesis. And if it should turn out that the known laws of matter and light and electricity all follow if we grant this one property to space, then there would be the strongest reason for believing that the original hypothesis was true,—that space does behave as if it were composed of solid grains. And this is what we are asked to believe has been done. Professor Reynolds claims that, if space is granular, if its grains have the size and the density and the other properties that he has found for them, then his mathe-

matics will show how gravitation, and all the phenomena of light and heat and electricity, follow as a matter of pure reasoning. "Then, considering that not one of these phenomena had previously received a mechanical explanation, it appears how indefinitely small must be the probability that there should be another structure for the universe which would satisfy the same evidence."

There is one advantage that a scientific man enjoys above all other men, namely, that he lives in the most interesting and exciting times that ever were. For him there are no regrets for lost arts and lost traditions. He spends no time in contemplating an unapproachable past,

and there are plenty of worlds left for him to conquer. If he has a spark of enthusiasm in him he thanks heaven in private that he is alive in such a surpassing present, though if he is wise he dissembles his enthusiasm in public, for there are superior persons about. A serious and apparently successful attempt to show how the universe is constructed has led to the paradox that emptiness is full, and we and all our possessions are partial emptiness. Whether this be a case for enthusiasm or not, it is a wonderfully interesting notion: a paradox is apt to have a peculiar charm for minds that are not too empty—that is to say, too dense.

"PADDY THE SLITHERS." ¹*Words written to an Old Irish Air.*

BY MOIRA O'NEILL.

OCHONE! don't be tellin' me to fiddle or to play,
 Oohone! 'tis a pity that I lived to see this day.
 I'm fit to break my fiddle, or I'm fit to take an' die,—
 Wurra! Paddy the Slithers, could a woman make ye cry?
 I asked her for another dhrink, an' sure I'd played an hour,
 Oh, who could think that music sweet would turn a woman
 sour?

An' the company so pleasant sittin' back agin' the wall,
 But me bould Biddy Brogan ups an' says before them all,
*"I'll give ye no more. There' a well in the garden,
 'Tis there ye may dhrink, an' not pay a farden."*

I am Paddy the Slithers, and my father was the same,
 For I kep' his ould fiddle an' I won his ould name,
 That never said a false word or played a false note;—
 But the manners o' thon woman has me chokin' in the throat.
 I had played her "Baltigoran" an' "The Pedlar wid his Pack,"
 "The Wind that Shakes the Barley" an' "When Tony's Comin'
 Back,"

'Twas "The Rockin' o' the Cradle" I was goin' to give her next,
 An' troth! if I had wasted that, 'tis worse I would be vext,
 Wid her "*Not another dhrop! There' a well in the garden,
 'Tis there ye may dhrink, an' not pay a farden.*"

Good-bye, Biddy Brogan! now I'll tramp it through the rain,
 Good-bye, Biddy Brogan! for I'll never come again;
 I wouldn't let my fiddle sweet be soundin' in your place,
 You're the only one that ever brought the red into my face.
 You'll be wantin' music badly for your weddin' yet to be,
 An' faith! ye may do wantin' for all ye'll get from me;
 If the man you're coaxin' now could know the crossness of
 your mind,
 He'd be trampin' through the rain wid me an' lavin' you
 behind,

Wid your "*Not another dhrop! There' a well in the garden,
 'Tis there ye can dhrink, an' not pay a farden.*"

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CHILDREN OF TEMPEST.¹

A TALE OF THE OUTER ISLES.

BY NEIL MUNRO.

CHAPTER IX.—NIGHT SOUNDS.

THERE are two ways a person on foot or horseback may cross the ford from the upper Uist to Benbecula. Having come to the trough of Gramisdale, that is three-fourths over the passage, he may either make Gramisdale itself of it or turn to the right for the sake of a mile more of sand that is smooth and pleasant to walk on, and thus he will come at last to grass and the road that goes down by the back-bone of the three isles, busy at most seasons with people and herds. Whether Father Ludovick and his folk should come out of the ford at Gramisdale or Creggans, Duncan could only make a guess at, but he fancied, on a night like this, the shorter way was the more likely, so for Gramisdale he made when he turned his back on the man who so scurvily kept an inn, reckoning that what time he had to wait for the opening of the ford he could shelter in one of the houses that gathered in sand-blown nooks near the shore, to catch in times propitious the magnificence of the sun that goes down in such a glory there in the west, the folks can never doubt there is a Paradise.

He drew up his horse in the midst of the township, that was half Catholic, half Protestant, according as things had happened, and Catholic or Protestant all was one to him (in a sense) that greatly liked his fellows.

"I will tie my horse at a gable," he thought, "and pass an hour or two in *ceilidh*;" but what door he should make a first venture at in this place where for years he had been something of a stranger, he could not at once make up his mind on. The night was as black as the bottom of a bog; his pony and not himself had found the path from Creggans: as he stood by its head now in a clachan that seemed barred for ever against night and tempest, with nothing to show it was tenanted except a line of light here and there in the chink of doors and the pale glow of inward peat-fires coming through the holes in the roofs, he heard break out from a back-house the sound of a reel-tune softly whistled.

"Well, here's gaiety whatever of it!" thought Duncan, who loved a pleasant omen, and took a liberty that one may take with the gay heart

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he may never attempt with the doleful, for he led his horse to the back-house and drew back a sack that did for both glass and curtain in the hole that served for window. There were four girls with bare feet dancing discreetly on the clay floor, and a fifth that puckered her lips to the reel-tune, all of them so busy that they did not see that some one pried on them.

"*Suas e*, daughters!" said he, "faith, and it's in there yourselves are hearty on't."

"God's grace!" cried the whistler, and all of them stopped and stared at the window, where Duncan smiled.

"Not so hearty on it, stranger," said the whistler, finding nothing more than human in the interruption,— "not so hearty but what if things permitted, and men were not so noisy by nature, we could be doing with a lad or two at this reel that suffers from too many petticoats and a direful want of trews. Come and be good, and you can pick a partner. You have a dancing face on you or I'm mistaken."

"I have a dancing heart, I'll give you my word of that at any rate," said Duncan, "but I cannot indulge it to-night, for I'm here on a solemn occasion."

"My grief! You cannot have come to be married?" said the whistler, who was a rogue, by all the merriment and freedom of her countenance, "or we would have had some news of it."

"No," said he. "I'm waiting on the ford and some friends over in Uist at a funeral."

"Is that it, good man?" said she that whistled; "you're in luck that it's not your own, and are spared to see such beautiful dancing. We've here five maidens in the fear of life and the fear of death that the minister may come on us at a step or two of reeling, for the dance, like the song and the pipes and the fairy story, and all that is not dismal, are left nowadays for the Papan- aich."

"Fortunate, faith, are the Papan- aich then!" said Duncan, "and I'm glad for that, if it was for nothing else, I'm a Catholic myself. What I'm wanting is a ring to tie a horse to and the right side of a fire for a while till the ford is open."

They opened the door, and in the light of it for the first time saw his figure.

"Och, now, is it not a gentleman we have here?" said the whistler, the only one unabashed. "On the other side of the wall I took you, by your freedom, for a plain person."

"There you are again!" said Duncan. "There is not a plainer person in the three isles though I am not wearing home-made clothes. A gentleman would not have come without a bidding to look at your dancing, and if I was here on another errand, I would try to make amends with four good reels, and one-and-a-half for the musician that can whistle in a way to vex the lark."

They laughed at his compliment, and showed him to the best house in the clachan. He

went in with "Hail to the household!" and found there was bedrid in it a woman of age, propped on pillows, with a staff at her hand, who mastered a widow daughter and three tall pretty grandsons straight as fir-trees. The grandsons looked to his horse, and put his seat for him; the mother set his plaid to dry, but the old one in her bed it was that gave him the words of welcome.

"Just that! just that!" she said to his explanations, "just that! honest man; and it is from South Uist you have come now? Indeed! indeed! A kind country, and well I know it. If manners would let me, I might have been asking whether you came from the east or west of it! But I am not inquiring. I have known good folks in both."

"The best in the world's there yet," said Duncan—"except such of them as may be in Benbecula—and for the particular bit of it I come from Corodale."

"Corodale!" cried the dame. "On my soul, but that's tidings! You speak a scholarly Gaelic, not like us riffraff of Benbecula black houses. There would not be much wonder on me if you were of the one notable family in Glen Usinish; and if that were so, I carried your mother to her christening, being myself a girl in her mother's kitchen."

"Then," said Duncan, "you carried one that was a good mother herself—faith, the best!—and was worthier of a better son."

The woman was almost blind with age; she made an eave to her forehead with a trembling wrinkled hand and peered at him out of two pits, seeing him all the more dimly because he was between her and the light. Putting out her stick she caught him with the crook of it by the arm and drew him, laughing, over to her bed. "Let me look at you!" said she, and put her face up close to his. Then she smiled herself. "I have had you in my lap, son, and the hide of you was mottled like the back of a Druidibeg trout. You're not the Col one, but the priest one, Duncan, the son of a tall and manly parentage. Have you walked? If you have, my girl must bathe the feet of you. No, you have ridden!—then these large good-for-nothing lads of mine must look well to the horse and seek beds elsewhere, for here you will stay this evening."

"Grandmother," said Duncan, "I am much in your reverence; but I am going back to-night to Creagory, and am waiting here but an hour or two for the opening of the ford that I may meet the priest of Boisdale, Master Ludovick, and his people, who have been burying old Dermosary at the Trinity Temple. I missed the occasion by a tide through the foolishness of a fellow they call Dark John."

"Dark John!" said the woman. "Is that old vagabond to the fore yet, and better folks in Purgatory? And Dermosary is dead? Peace with him and his share of Paradise! he was a wild man, and I'm wondering

if he kept his fingers out of the fifty years' fortune. If not, then the Worst Place is his portion."

Duncan stood back abashed a bit, and spoke of going out to see what night it made.

"You will not put a foot over the door," said she, "until my daughter boils some eggs. Your mother was a lady; there was more than pickings of bones in her house. Your father, her first man—I'll say nothing of her second—had charms for rich and poor. Not a foot till eggs are made for you, master. You cannot live like the herrings, that thrive and fatten on the foam they make with their own tails."

Duncan promised surely to come back in a little, and went out to look at his horse, to see how stood the tide, and, if possible, find a *ceilidh* party, for he loved the ancient tales.

It was nine o'clock; the storm was at a lull, though out on Eachkamish the surf was booming. In the dark above him there were the most wonderful sounds: the beat of wings that seemed never to have a conclusion; strange contending cries of birds—pictarnie, and skart, and swan—travelling in hosts on their own purposes, which man can never hinder nor divine, winging their way over the islands, a humming in their feathers, no share of the thoughts of the human world in the heads they craned cleaving the darkness. The ford, by the sound of it, was almost empty; he put hands behind his ears to listen for any rumour of the funeral party. But

there was none. Away to his right a mouth yawned, and breathed a cloud of light; there was a kiln there where folks in other seasons made kelp, and he walked across to join them.

Four men were having a little *ceilidh* round their furnace, men of the true island kind, counting themselves the equal of the best, speaking frankly yet always with consideration for the stranger, who had to say to them but the name of Corodale to make sure of his welcome. Duncan sat long with them in the shelter of some drift-timber, and talked with them of the seasons and the activities and interests of the Long Island; of kelp prices and breeds of black cattle, of fishing and peat-cutting, and all the things that are of moment in life. There was one that was a wit, and told stories—true *sgeulachdan* generations old, of happenings with giant and dwarf and treasure. Let tales or songs be going and Duncan was ever the man to listen; he forgot that eggs were at the boiling for his delectation, hearing of Conal Croibhidh and Manus, and told a tale for himself that night as good as these, a tale that is in the Greek books, with never a passage to come in it that his hearers could not have guessed before they heard it,—for there is in all lands, with simple folk, but the one true way to carry on a story and make the same things happen freshly every time.

While they sat round the kiln with the driftwood over

them, the wind got up again and sleet began to fall. Duncan, with a sudden recollection of the girl who was with the funeral company, brought his story to an end and put his back to the furnace to look into the darkness. He could almost fancy that Benbecula rocked in the sea, torn from her old foundations: women came to the end of the town and cried for their husbands, the men who sat before the kiln, and they ran up to save their roofs, so that Duncan was left alone. He went to the margin of the ford and put an ear to the ground to listen. At first he brought from the tangle of the storm only the tern's "wheet-ah!" or the scream of a skart, and then he made out the oddest sound, of human voices drifting about the darkness outside, like souls in black perdition. It came in cries and murmurings, the desolation of the sands tenanted with the ghosts of the people of its terrible tales.

"They come at last," said he to himself, wondering how the girl had fared, thinking of her as a child with hair hanging down her back and shy eyes as he had seen her last, seven years ago.

But the voices came no nearer; they hovered strangely on the sands, blown about like feathers.

"They must be making for Creggans," thought Duncan now, and determined to go out and see. He hurried up to the little town, and threw his saddle on his pony; ran into the house that had meant to

entertain him, and got his plaid.

"You will not leave the house this night till you have the eggs," cried the old one with the *cromag*, in her bed, "though they are as hard as stones by your own waiting."

He laughed, and declared he had no appetite, kissed a child that stood sleepily on the floor looking up at him, said he might be back, and went out. The pony baulked at the verge, but answered to the heel, and cantered out upon the sands with a splash in tiny rivulets. "A neap-tide," thought the rider, "and filling early." He heard no more the sound of voices; the wind mastered all till he reached the trough of Gramisdale, and here he came upon a man that bellowed, running his horse about in foolish circles, plainly not knowing what he was doing.

"My God!" he cried to Duncan's question, and took to whimpering. "My God! is not Herself lost—the darling, and Master Ludovick in the half-horrors?" And he started to cry the name of Anna like a man demented. He did not utter another word of explanation, but gave his horse her head, and galloped up the ford. Then Duncan, standing still a moment, heard again the sand noisy with murmurs and distant cries, and the name of Anna fighting here and there through the wind. He knew the ford as he knew the inside of his own pocket, for a hundred times, as a boy, he had followed his father's wandering droves

of cattle over it to the market. The thoughts of what was possible to the girl—of quicks and pools, and aimless straying till high tide—came horrible and confounding to his brain; and he, too, rode across the sands crying her name.

CHAPTER X.—HIGH TIDE.

Sometimes he stopped and put his hands behind his ears to gather the wandering sounds, but no answer came to his calls. The others who cried were for a while far to the west, and then went drifting—by their declining cries—eastward towards Grimsay, and the night held him alone when he sent his voice among the huddling rocks and over the little islands. He tried the region of the quicks, and felt the silvery shriek of the sand under his pony's hoofs. He circled the deeper pools, crying the name of Anna till his throat burned, and still found every isle and rock and all the plains of sand unoccupied except for the birds of the sea that heard him with astonishment, and rose to sweep complaining overhead. So much was he mastered by hopes and fears that he made no count of time nor of the tide, till he came to himself with a shock when a dash of spray struck him on the cheek. For a moment he stopped considering. If he turned now he could make the land with safety, but there was still the island of Trialabreck to visit, and the girl might very well be there. Indeed, now that, with all the best of him stiffened to a crisis, he thought calmly, there was nowhere more likely; but if he searched Trialabreck he must stay there till the ford

was dry again. The last consideration scarcely found its image in his mind when off he set among the splashing waves, making the wind his compass, and came in a while to the island. For a moment he stood on the verge of it, silent, afraid to put it to the test and lose the last of his hopes.

"Anna!" he cried, at the end, with some odd sense that he would not cry this time in vain, and a great happiness filled him when he heard an answer.

"A lucky man who knows what he wants has but to shut his eyes for a little or go out in the dark and find good fortune at his feet," he thought, leading his pony over the stones. He could see nothing, but he could hear another pony's whinny, and "Who are you?" he was asked, in a voice that surprised him; for all the time he had pictured such a child as he had slightly known in Boisdale before he went to France, and this was something like a woman's utterance. He put his answer and his explanation in a sentence, coming up beside her where she stood in the hollow below the rock.

"I am so glad you have come," was all she said, almost like to break in tears, and smiling in the darkness as if he could see her, and so

discover there were no womanly terrors here. "I am so sorry to trouble you."

"There is no trouble about it," said Duncan, "except that I have not come upon you sooner. With a little more judgment I might easily have done so, and now I am sorry to say we must remain where we are till the tide ebbs, for even if your whereabouts were known there is not a boat on this side of Benbecula to face such weather."

"My poor Ludovick!" said Anna, with a pang to think of her brother desolate till daylight. For herself now she had no fears: there was something in the voice of this new companion of her misfortune to set her wholly at her ease. She explained briefly the cause of her misadventure.

"If you are safe and well yourself, so far, that is the first consideration," said he, busily. "The tide will not reach us here, and we will not be the first who have passed a night on Trialabreck. Are you cold?"

"No, not so very cold," said she, clenching her teeth to keep them from chattering, and wondering a little at the want of a deference she was lately grown accustomed to.

"Cold enough to be the better for a plaid more," said Duncan, "and you must have mine when I have seen to the ponies;" but she would not consent to this deprivation. He took the saddles from the ponies, and for a little was thus engaged, while she stood by, weary in every limb, and thinking it odd

to have the company and service of one whose appearance she could not even guess at. He made her saddle into a seat for her, put his own beside it—very close, indeed, she could not but think, for a new acquaintance—and seating himself, threw his plaid about their knees.

"Are you comfortable now?" said he, maintaining a composure lest the child should be too easily induced to tears.

"Oh, I am very well, thank you," said Anna, and could not resist an irony. "I—I hope you will make yourself comfortable too," she added, and no sooner saying it than she felt ashamed. But he had no suspicion of her humour: in spite of her voice he went back to his old conceptions of a Boisdale hoyden with her hair flowing. "I am so pleased to have found you that I'm almost forgetting how unhappy the folk on shore will be till morning."

"My dear Ludovick!" said Anna again, and then Duncan felt a touch upon his sleeve.

"Could we not—could we not shake hands?" said she timidly. "It was so brave of you to come, and I would just like to shake hands."

"Shake hands!" said he. "Of course! of course! How stupid that I should forget!" He felt for her hand in the darkness, found damp chilly fingers and a warm palm, which he pressed hurriedly. "On my word," said he, "I ought indeed to be shaking hands with you, for I might have been *each* *uisse* coming

out of the tide on you in this fashion."

"I'll admit I thought of *each usage*—of the water-horse—myself when I heard your pony's splashing first," said Anna.

"And so much of a stranger, too! We have both been long away from the islands, have we not? But we'll have time to make better acquaintance before the ebb."

"My poor Ludovick!" said Anna yet again. "I wish it was ebb now."

"Of course, of course!" said Duncan, with a smile in his voice, "though the wish is hardly a compliment to your present company. Let us think how glad your brother will be to find you safe; it will make more than amends for his anxieties," and he drew his saddle an inch or so nearer, till their shoulders almost touched, giving her further shelter from the wind that whistled round the rock they leaned against. Smuggling, thought Anna, was a trade that gave considerable elbow-room to the manners. She would have preferred the deference to start with, but must confess to herself that after all it was not the hour nor place for ceremony; for together in the night they might be the sole survivors of a ruined universe, or the first creatures set in a new and dubious Paradise of storm.

A bud of light suddenly showed itself on their right over Gramisdale; it blossomed into a flower of flame.

"They have started a beacon," said Duncan. "I wish we could reply, but I have the material

for neither light nor fire." She stared at the distant flame, sighing, half for her overwhelming weariness, half for longing, but found some comfort in the signal.

"The time will pass quickly," he assured her, and put a light, encouraging, kindly hand on her shoulder, where a damp strand of her hair lay astray from its fellows. She started at his touch. "I beg your pardon!" said he, wondering how old she was, and whether she was good-looking. For a child with her hair hanging he thought her manifestly oversensitive. It was likely, he thought, that she was on the point of a hysteria, and he hurried into a conversation about the funeral (always with their eyes on the distant beacon), and he explained the reason for his absence.

"My brother looked for you at Creggans," said Anna, but did not tell that she had a notion to meet a notorious hero.

"That I was not there," said Duncan, "was no fault of my own, but must be the blame of your brother's messenger. He came to Corodale, by all appearance, with a bidding only for my brother, who was from home; and for his own reasons, that have puzzled me ever since, he misled me by a tide, and brought me to the ford six hours late."

"That is curious, certainly; for it was yourself the man was most anxious to have here with us, and there is none whose name is more often on his lips."

"Then that is odder still,

I'll assure you, for I never, to my knowledge, saw the man between the eyes till he came last night to Corodale."

Anna started. "Oh!" said she, with a gasp, "I took you all the time for Mr Col, and—and——"

"And by worse luck for you I am merely his brother Duncan. Plain Duncan, Anna, no more nor less. And that's the mischief of the thing! Col, I feel sure, would have had his wits about him, and tried Trialabreck first of all, and got you off before the tide was too high. Well, I'm lucky enough myself to be just in time to bear you company."

There was a good deal of "Anna" in this for a first acquaintance, thought the girl, and sat in the darkness speechless.

"Are you cold?" said he again, at a loss for anything else to say in such a coil of curious circumstances.

"No, not now, only weary, and a little sleepy," she replied, her eyelids like lead. "It is so stupid of me, but I could not sleep last night in that inn on the other side."

"The sooner you sleep the sooner the morning will come, then," said her companion, and then there was no more between them. She leant against the rock, all her body so relaxed with life she feared to swoon, and fighting her fear she fell asleep.

He watched the flame, that was the only evidence of another world than this. It never

failed, though for some hours more the ancient furies possessed the isle of Trialabreck, and he had some comfort in the certainty that it was her brother's beacon of hope. He could not hear her breathing, but felt the pulse of it, and by-and-by her head slipped from along the cold hard pil-
lowing of the rock until it found a place at last upon his shoulder. "Poor child!" said he, feeling very pitiful. He had a thought to put his arm about her, but feared she might awaken, and so he sat with her head on his shoulder. Her bosom rose and fell on his arm—surely somewhat generous for a girl so young—and set him wondering again upon her aspect—whether she was like her brother; upon her mind—whether she had brought back from the convent-school the bleak innocence he had found in girls of that experience. And full of these reflections he drowsed himself, so that the Long Ford of Uist had a marvel, in a rock tenanted by a man and a maiden who had never seen each other, and still were sitting dreaming in the dark together, upon the cheerless sanctuary of the gannet and the tern. The sea clanged, the wind declined to dry gusts, the tide began to turn.

The creatures of the ocean, the sea-folk of the *ceilidh* tales, that romp in billows and ramble in the weedy deeps, came to Trialabreck to see what God saw once, and only for a little, in His Garden.

CHAPTER XI.—THE AWAKENING.

It was not for long they slept, out of the world and life and yet on the edge of them, happy because heedless, victorious over perils and temptations, and indifferent because unaware. Her hair billowed on his shoulder, and her body was warm against his arm: if he had listened closely he might have heard her placid breathing—surely to some moods of ours the most pitiful thing in the world. But he was in the other dream that contains and commands us as much and as truly as that we inhabit in daytime, unconscious that here was Eve—Eve with the flowing hair and lips untried, sometimes sighing in her sleep.

He was the first to waken and find his shoulder was still her pillow. He did not move, but sat watching the light at Gramisdale. The wind had dropped from its thundering to a melancholy coronach of sound in the distance and a whisper among the rushes of the islet. There was no booming out on Eachkamish; the smell of fresh ooze and new-bared wrack was in the darkness—the tokens of a falling tide. But welcome more than all the rest to Duncan was a patch of stars over Grimsay and a faint portent of the moon; in an hour at most they could quit Trialabreck.

He was not sorry. He had given her all his plaid an hour ago, and Adam was cold and Adam was hungry, with Eve not much in his mind, and he was thinking how much wiser

he had been to have pocketed the eggs that had been made ready for him in the hospitable house in Gramisdale. But he thought of Father Ludovick too, grief-stricken on Benbecula—on the priest's plight more than on his sister's, for he knew that strenuous ardent heart, and could imagine it beat to bursting over where the beacon flared and folks were waiting for the fallen tide. There, he thought, was a man forlorn in the world, though surrounded by people who loved him and that had his inmost heart, for he soared over the mists of Hecla and Benmore like the golden *iolar* on his thoughts, while they, except when they felt stirred to accord with the simplest of his raptures, trudged the macharland and peat-moss, tethered to the rocks. His morning walks were bounded by the same sea-strand and the same cliffs that marked their own, but they did not walk with him that loved them, they did not understand. A lonely man—though often exalted and happy—and over yonder in Gramisdale he was in despair for his sister.

As thus he was thinking, now with eyes on the tiny garden of stars, now on the withering bloom of the beacon upon Gramisdale, Anna wakened too. She lifted her head quickly, seemed stunned for a moment by the mystery she had come to, then saw the beacon-light of her brother, had everything flash to her understanding, and

shrank abashed at her own delicacy. Duncan understood, not by thinking, as it might seem, but by some magic message through every pore of his body. Eve was awake, and wise, and frightened, and ashamed! Well, Adam was a gentleman; he pretended that he still was fast asleep.

She listened for a moment to his breathing, laid the plaid about his knees softly, and rose gently to her feet. She stole to the islet's edge and found the sea receded and almost calm. How glad she was that very soon she might escape from this imprisonment and join Ludovick over at the beacon. Upon a little patch of grass she knelt and said her morning prayer—the morning prayer of all these Islands—

*"Iosda Criosda, thanks to Thee
That brought me from the deeps
of night
Into the solace of the light,
Through blood atoning shed for me;"*

and bathed her face and hands with another tiny prayer of the Islands, as for a lustration. If the uncanny tenants of the deeps were haunting round the edge of Trialabreck then, be sure they must have taken fins for it and swam far out and deep into their abominable caves; and if the others were there—the maidens that sing riding free on billows with half souls and wistfulness when they look on the wholly blest—be sure they were kneeling about her on the strand, loving this sweet half-sister Anne.

When she returned to their shelter she found her com-

panion of the night awake. "So you have not run away and left me?" said he craftily, when she stood before him, a figure taller than he expected, though still to be seen but dimly. "I think I must have been sleeping for hours,—the thing's a gift in the family."

"Oh, I was almost dead for sleep myself," said she, relieved to think he did not know. "And now I am quite refreshed. The ford is drying; we may go soon, and have Macfarlane's lantern with us, for the moon is rising."

"We may set out in less than half an hour," said Duncan, looking from her dim figure to the patch of stars, and mildly wishful to see her face. The coronach on the isle was only a whisper now, the water was lapping round the edge of Trialabreck with a friendly sound in the way of hidden pools round ancient keeps in the deep old glens—with the kindly sounds of old friends, old cronies that have had many gallant times together. And the birds flew seaward again, high over them, sometimes blurring the garden of stars, chuckling together as they flew. The wan eye of Cragory, the lamp that guides the wanderer on the ford, shone through the dark behind them, and the beacon of Gramisdale, fed with fresh timber, bloomed again. The morning air was fresh and clean, giving a gladness to the man and woman as if they had drunk wine.

"Oh, I must rise and go away!" hummed Duncan, in the words of MacMhaister

Alastair's ditty, and took to the saddling of the ponies, while Anna stood apart and looking on, curious as to what fashion of man was this that had so strangely borne her company. The last faint breath of the wind—that was like a sigh to leave her—blew a stray lock of her hair across her cheek; she hastened to trim herself before the moon revealed her. In the upper space the clouds flew hurriedly across the heavens; it grew clearer every moment; at last the moon jumped in among the stars that faded and died of envy, and Duncan fastened the last buckle, and turned about to find a woman with a wan face regarding him.

"*Mo chreach!*" said he to himself, dumfounded; "have not I been a fool!" He had nothing to say for a moment as he looked at her there in the moonlight, composed and wan, her face upheld, and her eyes eager.

She guessed the cause of his silence and had to smile.

"Shake hands," said he at that, with his hat off. "Shake hands again, and forgive me all my liberties. I am like the man in the story; I went to sleep when you were a child, and I wakened to find you grown into a woman. I was so long away in France that I did not know. I am afraid my manners——"

"Were not French," said Anna, as he stopped for want of words. "If they had been, I daresay I would have been less at my ease. You have been very good, and I, and I

—oh, I have been so rude. I think—I think, I—I slept."

"Faith! I know I did," said he, and dwelt in her eyes, that were lit so wonderfully by this tardy moon. "I did not know my own good fortune—there I am like the man in the other story—I did not know my own good fortune. If it were not for Father Ludovick over there, I could very gaily be taking the saddles off and sitting down again at a more respectful distance, and talking till day-break, just to show I am not wholly so stupid as you must think me."

"What!" cried Anna; "and spare me no chance of proving I am fairly clever myself! But I'm afraid all that must stand for another occasion," she added more gravely. "I can only be thinking of Ludovick."

"What a happy man is Ludovick!" thought Duncan; and to make her happy too, the sooner, he proposed that they should try the ford immediately.

They set out in a world of light—the shallow waters like a floor of gold under the riding moon. They saw Hecla and Benmore before them sombre and high above the beacon. The tide ran fast; by-and-by they trotted upon grey sand strewn with birds, and heard before them the inquiring cries of human voices. Duncan turned in his saddle and took a last look at Trialabreck, feeling friendly to that cold islet where he had spent a night so curious. A little later Anna was in her brother's arms.

CHAPTER XII.—THE DEAD MONTHS.

Now were the dead months, as they call them in the Uists, —November of the fogs, December of the hurricanes. Seamen going past from warm lands then, must pity the poor isles —as high on spars, astounded, they saw them of a sudden through the rain, or leaned on the bulwarks and had compassion, maybe, on the people sentenced here to a perpetual banishment, suffering for ever the harassment of winds, the anger of the Sounds. But Uist, none the less, was happy even then as any land of lighted cities. They saw black rain-rotted thatch —these tropic mariners; they saw the reek of townships to all appearance knee-deep in morasses, but they did not see the warm peat-fires within. They heard perhaps the *langanaiche*—the sad inquiry of the lowing cattle wandering over the salt plains; but they never had a guess of evening melodies in the huts. The dead months—but it is then there is most leisure in Uist of the winds and sheldrakes. There was a saying once that a new song was put together every day somewhere between the two Bernerays, and seldom was the poem doleful, so quick, and clever, and content the folks of the Outer Isles. There must have been a handful of such ballads fashioned in Uist each day that tempest blew, for always the island spirit feels its best when the world is thundering. Then Ludovick, when he saw the great round

moon rise rolling through wrack of clouds, Hecla and Benmore dragging through them, brave companions of carouse, belated, the sea of a sudden revealed, and all its hints and passions, thought on the words of Genesis, "And the earth was void and empty." He would say to Anna, as they watched together, "I have it here!" and beat on his breast, "I have it here; I share God's gladness at the Creation." He had eighty pounds a-year — little enough for a partner with God in His operations, and yet for that same reason all-sufficient; eighty pounds—and Valladolid to remember, and good wines; music, pictures, cheerful folk with sparkling conversations, but he put that all behind him with no pang, relieved and gay to have done the day's duty, loving his people truly. There are no gardens in Boisdale, for there, too cruel, blows the wind, but Father Ludovick had a garden that bloomed in these dead months: his fancies flowered; he came with perfumes from the soul to the huts, sedate or smiling. Then the people had leisure to talk with him, and many were their conversations. They speak in Uist sensibly, with that simplicity that was common with the old great kings, mingling gravity and mirth, saying nothing merely for its cunning or display. He moved upon the surface of things in these fine talks on food and fire, cattle, ships, men, women, work, all

the matters that most affect us; but sometimes he must long to indulge himself in depths his people could not reach to—sometimes books palled, the hours hung heavy, and Anna often tried to make him have a holiday.

"You are looking ill, Ludovick—as grey as a ghost," she would tell him. "You must take a jaunt and a rest on the mainland, or I'll soon be a widow woman."

He would glance in a glass and laugh to see the healthy tan of his countenance, that told him she was but manœuvring.

"Well, if you are not, you ought to be," would Anna say then. "I am vexed to have a common barnacle for a brother, that sticks on this rock from year's end to year's end and never goes anywhere to bring back a new story for his sister, or give her a rest from her continual toil and moil for his lazy comfort."

He would put a hand through his hair and laugh again at that.

"Let us take a month's travelling," she would propose.

"What!" he would say, "and leave poor Uist shepherdless? Besides, there is the question of money, girl Anna."

To that she had an answer in her mind; but it never got expression from her lips, for one matter was between them that was never mentioned.

"Travel!" he would say. "I can be travelling every day from Port-nan-long to Poll-acher and see the world there."

"Yes! yes! but not the pictures in Italy."

"The pictures in Italy were made by men who stayed at home attending to their own affairs. Have we not the morning and the evening on Benmore? And there is nothing to be found in travelling but what you take with you in your trunk. But—you will go yourself, dear," he said once on a sudden thought, and off he packed her to the Lowlands that winter after the death of their uncle. She was scarcely out of sight of windy Uist when she knew that she was rooted, too, among the dunes, and this travelling was something of a folly.

The dead months for once seemed worthy of their name to Father Ludovick. He missed her singing in the kitchen; he would lie awake at night trying to see her over the dark and over the sea, three hundred miles away.

In November came a great change to Corodale, also; for the mother died, and Duncan was the master. He was that at least in name; but in truth our stuck priest relinquished all, and was no better than a servant without wages. He would have gone away, but there was much to do in the interests of the ancient patrimony. Now was Col more busily on foot than ever, an owner of many skiffs, hirer of many crews, though he could protest at last he was at an end with smuggling. It was then he got the name of the New Man. By-names are found in these islands at a flash, to tell a story

in a word or paint a portrait, and to him the name New Man attached because of the sudden change that sent him regularly into Boisdale for the Mass, though his confessions must be elsewhere. The *Happy Return* still plied between the isles and Moidart or Argyll, and went now and then to the Lowlands, and sometimes seeing her careen off Corodale, Col would lament to Duncan the old days unregenerate when he shared her fortunes. They were not unhappy then, the two of them in Corodale, where Duncan was the stay-at-home, more greatly admiring his brother than ever, for his handsomeness, his skill at many things, his bravery in all. He thought he had his brother's inmost confidence. But there was a Col that would have puzzled him had he known, sitting up at nights in his upper room whereinto the moon had looked enormous on St Michael's night,—a Col who had gathered books from every airt where they could be borrowed — narratives of the wealthy, of domestic splendour, of travel and extravagance; and there in the upper room with a candle he would sit reading and thinking long after the rest of Corodale was asleep and the lights were blown out in Uist. Let Duncan have his *ceilidh* as he will; for Col the tales of far lands to travel in, of gallantries to buy, of people vastly prodigal. And when he tired of reading and of thought he filled pages with itineraries, of lands he would go through like the others, or with estimates of moneys he would spend

on buildings, and boats, and horses, and cattle.

It was remarked how often nowadays young Corodale's business brought him into Boisdale. "There will be tales to tell of this," said the spinster woman who carded wool that night he saved Dark John, and the good wife of Dalvoolin, who had seen his mouth, kept out of his way when she saw him come along the road, for fear he should discover what were her thoughts about him. He went to chapel always when he happened to be in the neighbourhood of Stella Maris, and always dipped his fingers awkwardly in the porringer that replaced the one he broke—the only awkward thing he did in life. Father Ludovic gave him the welcome of the priest and of the Gael commingled, the open hand and no inquiries. He would rather it had been the other brother, but Duncan never came to that part of the island, and indeed this Col had qualities to make him likeable by a priest that loved wit, and was too much the dreamer to comprehend how sometimes it might but poorly compensate for the lack of other virtues.

It was the day before *Nollaig*—it was on Christmas Eve—that Anna came home. The little boat that took her ashore from Scalisdale's lugger was hardly on the land when she was eagerly over the bow of it, with a thrill to feel the sand below her shoe-soles, the smiles and the tears of joy on her face, all her being moved tre-

mendously to be back with them that loved her.

"Who is that?" she asked Father Ludovick, when the greeting was over and they moved up to the house, and she indicated a tall figure, black-bearded and straight, that stood a little way off watching them.

Her brother looked into the setting sun, and he saw Young Corodale there, jetty black against the coppery west, a figure enormous and unnatural, so aloof in some way from this happy world of home-returns and content. He wished it had been ordered otherwise just for this day, though the arrangement had been his own, and that Col the New Man was at home in his own country.

"Oh, faith!" said he, "'tis Corodale; I forgot that he had expressed a wish to be here at your home-coming, and that I asked him over for this Christmas Eve."

"Not—not Duncan?" said she, searching with all her eyes.

"His brother Col. He has been very kind; he gave me much of his company in your absence," said Ludovick, and at that her staring ceased. "Duncan is doubtless better engaged in Corodale. I'm like yourself, perhaps, in preferring that it had been Duncan; but seeing it was the other I had e'en to make the best of it, and indeed one might have worse society. The fellow has some curious charm."

"Oh, as to preference——" said Anna hurriedly, and stopped. "Well, to tell the

truth, I wish it had been the other, too, for all that's come and gone, as we say. I'm afraid he's of the notion that Father Ludovick's sister must be anything but a credit to him, for I was out of my wits on Trialabreck, and he has never given me the opportunity either of thanking him or of showing that I was not so stupid as I looked. And this is Mr Col, is it? Upon my word now, Ludovick, one may be a smuggler and pass, so far as the looks go, for a gentleman."

"Smuggler no more, my dear," said Father Ludovick in an undertone, for Col approached them. "And, I assure you, quite the gentleman, like all of his name. Here, nowadays, we know him as the New Man, for very creditable reasons."

Col came forward, with a breeze of the heartiest welcome in his manner.

"Miss Anna," said he lightly, and still with the warmth of sincerity, "there's an old word of the Barra fishermen that bids the sea-bird welcome, after it has been south, 'Come home to the isles, for fortune is in your feathers.'" And then he felt dumfounded for a second, for the word "fortune," that had come in all innocency to his mouth, was the last that, on reflection, he would have chosen. But, luckily, no one noticed it but himself.

"You are very good," said Anna, laughing. "It's true enough of Edinburgh bonnets this winter," and she made a motion of her head that set the dark plumes there waving.

"Only I wish you had not mentioned it, for I had not intended to tell my brother what they cost until he had eaten his favourite pudding, that he must be weary for, to-morrow. But he's the sort of creature who would never have noticed them if they were tickling his very nose."

"Now! now!" said the priest, with admiration, "I assure you I thought there was something unusual rare and fine about you."

"Oh *mochree!*" cried Anna, "here's gallantry after all the Lowland lads! And my fineness is in my feathers! Mr Col, I have an eye for the practical cavalier if you please, and I would like to make you my brother's teacher in some polite arts that are not studied much in the isle of Uist. Tell him, will you, there can never be anything unusual rare and fine about any lady under forty; she's for ever at the pinnacle of her splendour, or else she's not worth looking at."

"Now that you're back," said Col, taking the step by her side, "we'll be at our practice immediately; what excuse could we have in honesty for our compliments and Miss Anna away?" He pulled his beard to a peak, threw back his shoulders, and felt a man come into a world he was born to ornament. There was astonishment in his mind if it was not in his face, for this lady, so self-composed and beautiful in the way of the wild-flower, was as different from her he had expected that for a minute or two at least he forgot she was

first and foremost the girl of fortune.

"You are come for our Christmas Eve," she said as they rose on the brae to the presbytery. "I am so glad, for I have Edinburgh cakes."

"Not a bit better, I'll wager, than the ones you could have baked yourself," protested her brother.

"Thank you, Ludovick!" said she. "We're getting on at our gallantries. Your influence, Mr Col, is for the very best, I can see that; but my Edinburgh cakes are so good, as you'll find, that I'm only sorry you did not bring your brother to share in them."

"Oh, Duncan!" cried Col, and no more than that, but a great deal in the accent of it.

"Exactly," said Anna, reddening at the tone. "And why not? Who, please, has a better claim on the gratitude of myself—and Ludovick? Let me tell you—no, I will not tell you; I must not be rude. But I must hurry to my kitchen if this bannock eve of ours is rightly to be celebrated, and you two can follow at your leisure." And off she ran for the White House, all the way annoyed, for some reason that she did not tell herself, leaving admiring eyes behind.

Col saw he must be cautious. He found he had a different spirit to contend with from what he had expected. Plainly it was to take all his knowledge of the mind of man and woman to keep Miss Anna outside of him upon the plausible surface. She had, perhaps, the piercing

eye, but was too modest yet for that to be seen; she had certainly the understanding ear that comprehends the spirit of all spoken words, and is cursedly dangerous to any but the man of single mind. He looked after her as she turned the corner of the presbytery, and marvelled to see how much of an air of the domestic and refined she gave even to the white-harled walls of that austere old dwelling. It was but a priest's cell before; now it was a home.

"Yes," said Father Ludovick, following his eyes, and with more certainty than surmise,— "yes; she does! she does! she makes the place as jolly as if every day was a day of weddings. I am glad you came, Col, to share our bannock *Nollaig*; what were these isles, so unkindly dealt with, as I sometimes think, by God, but for the genialities of man and woman? I'm telling you" (he turned to his Gaelic, that was for him the language of the deep emotions),—"I'm telling you on my own soul, and on the life of me, that I brought her home simply by the wishing for it. She was not to be here for another fortnight, as we had planned it when she went away, but I lay at night in my selfishness and said over the sea and over the night, 'Come back, come back to Uist,' and I'll warrant she heard me in her dreams."

"I'm not denying it," said Col, "but what are sea and darkness when there's but the one wish between them?"

"Do you think so? Do you

think so?" cried this foolishly fond priest, all glowing with pleasure. "Well, well, I would not say."

'Twas a merry night that night in Uist of the winds. All the lamps were lit, the townships were blythe and hearty. Lovers stumbled against each other in the paths that cross the isle, poorly lighted by a grey moon in her black boundaries; the songmen—the guisards—went in masquerade from house to house at their diversions. A calm night, with the kindness of May, so that when supper was done, Anna and Col and Ludovick went out on the hillock to hear the long roll of the sea in the creeks, to see the sparkle of the dwellings, to listen to the choruses. The night was full of sea-scents and the odours of turfen fires. A hundred skiffs lay in the bay, to every one a lamp in token of the festivity, and as they softly rocked in the waves from side to side, they seemed like tall flowers of the night. The priest looked from them to the chapel lights—for Our Lady Star of the Sea was being made ready for the Mass; and he thought indeed the world was good and beautiful, and Col counted the skiffs and summed up their profits, and Anna sighed with content that she was home again and the tang of the ocean in her nostrils.

"Oh," she said, "it is good to be back. The folk were pitying me when I was leaving to come home, for what they called this hermitage on an

island. Ludovick—Mr Col—can you guess what I said to them? ‘It is I that will be pitying you, poor dears, in your houses and your grey streets of stone, the same every day and every hour of it, when I’m looking from my window at the miracles of the sea, and feeling the heart in me like a bird.’”

“Ah! ’tis blest to be happy and young!” said her brother, with the air of the pastor.

“True, true, Father,” said Anna; “I am glad to have the confirmation of antiquity. Is he not failing with age, this brother of mine, Corodale?—six-and-thirty if a day—but so tremendously wise!”

“I’m not Corodale, strictly speaking,” explained Col, as her brother moved away to speak to some of his people grouped close at hand waiting the hour of chapel. “The honour of the name’s my brother Duncan’s.”

“And I am sure he will do credit to it,” said Anna, a little more heartily, as she felt in a moment, than she had intended.

“More than poor Col could do, I confess to you,” said he. “What am I but a rough home-bred one, half porpoise, half mole, that has never been long enough away from his birthplace to get the peat-reek of home blown out of his clothing?”

“Nor the warmth of it out of his nature, I’m hoping, Mr Col.”

“That Duncan should be master is in the way of nature; and, as you say, it best befits him——”

“You are scarcely complimentary to my manners, Mr Col,” said Anna. “It has been the misfortune of my brother’s house that you have been too busy to let us see either of you there to give us the chance of judging any of your qualities or of letting you know our own. I hope your brother has some of your bravery—you see what a plain blunt speaker I am, Mr Col?—and that you have some of his gentleness. I am not like to forget in a hurry his goodness that night I sat in Trialabreck trying my best to be courageous like a true MacNeil, and swallowing my heart like a woman every time a gannet cried in the dark. You will do this for me, Mr Col, will you not?—you will send your brother to Boisdale when it may earliest suit his convenience, so that I may have a chance to thank him—what am I saying? He—you—must think me very bold to say that. And still I should like——”

“Naturally, Miss Anna, naturally,” said Col. “The scamp has been ill-considered in his manners that he has not been here before now to inquire for the lady he had the good fortune to be of a small service to. He is a man of many charms, Duncan—there’s not a nobler fellow in some ways in the Long Island—no, nor for many a hundred miles about them; but he has that ridiculous interest in his duty, as he thinks it, to Corodale, that as you know is not in the best condition at present, for all the pair of us can be doing to amend it—that—that——”

"That he cannot spare the time," said Anna coldly. "Oh, I understand! I hope I will never come between any honest man and his duty. I must say to you, though, that it's pleasant the sinful world is not always so set upon its duty, and that though Mr Duncan has been too much engaged to visit us, his brother got the time to come for a crack occasionally with my brother, who valued such a thing all the more in the absence of his sister, that perhaps has too much to say. To tell you the truth, I daresay I was less anxious to show my gratitude to your brother than to have an opportunity of showing him what a very clever young lady I was in spite of all the evidence to the opposite that night he kept me company on the ford. Are you astonished, Mr Col, to find Father Ludovick's sister so vain and foolish? It is because I'm in the

dark I can tell you this: if it was light, you would be seeing a very demure and modest person, I assure you."

There was something so sprightly in her manner, so unexpected in her moods—now proud, now soft—that it fairly captured Col's fancy, and his character for the moment took—as was the case often with him—its colour from that of his companion. The darkness favoured him, as it had ill favoured his brother on Trialabreck, and, escaping the scrutiny of her eyes, he could freely discover in himself emotions he had not felt for many a year, and experience a sincere satisfaction in her company. It came out in his conversation, in his very accent. For once he fairly shone, a better man than ever he had been before. He felt no sense of the intruder that night at Mass in Our Lady Star of the Sea.

(*To be continued.*)

THE SETTING OF THE MOON.

BY GIACOMO LEOPARDI.

Translated by Sir Theodore Martin, K.C.B.

As in the lonesome night
 Shining o'er meads, and waters silver'd bright,
 And rippled by the breeze,
 Where strange fantastic forms of every kind,
 Vague, mystic, undefined,
 Their lengthened shadows cast,
 O'er mere and marsh and rill,
 On bough and brake, on villa and on hill,
 At the horizon's uttermost confine,
 The moon sinks down behind 10
 The ridge of Alp or Apennine,
 Or slips into the bosom broad and vast
 Of the Tyrrhenian bay,
 And all the world grows in a moment grey,
 The shadows melt away in air,
 Mountain and vale and all around
 Are with a sombre pall embrown'd,
 And night is left forlorn and bare:
 And with a song of doleful strain
 The waggoner is fain 20
 To hail the last departing gleam
 Of what has been the guide all night
 To him and to his team;
 So doth youth disappear,
 And quit this mortal sphere!
 Away they fleet,
 Like phantoms of a dream,
 All the illusions that were late so sweet,
 And the far-reaching hopes,
 That are man's chiefest stay, 30
 Grow fainter day by day;
 Life is in darkness wrapt, profound,
 Black, desolate, and drear,
 And if into its maze he tries to peer,

prove very useful people. He kindly offered to escort me up a sandy road to the village, which lay a mile away. It was growing dusk when we entered the village street, some quarter-of-a-mile in length, and we might easily have passed by the "Manpei Hotel"—one of an inconspicuous wooden block—had there not been a couple of white tourists smoking out of a window on our right. No doubt of their nationality; that querulous soulless stare which is their way of saluting a new arrival: "O Lord!" it seems to say, "how long must we suffer Outsiders?" But the Head of the house knows how to make up for their deficiencies, as he hastens out to offer the proverbial "warmest welcome at an inn"; so does his young wife, spotlessly clean, up at five, the life and brain of the house, never sarcastic or "put out," the long day through alert and cheerful, and always on the spot, in spite of six young children to whom she is court of appeal at each tiniest *contre-temps*. She commands respect from every nationality, and can do anything except speak English—and that she probably can, but Japanese women, unlike men, shrink from a foreign language unless they can talk it properly. Her penultimate offspring, Gōrō, a boy of two, was sitting on the dais, noting the new imports with a satisfied air, and he now accosted me in an imperious tone, "*kochi oide nasai*" (please come here), extending his fat arm, and repeating the request, "*kochi ye o kake nasai*" (please sit here).

Wishing to respond to the friendliness of his reception, I unlaced my shoes—which he knew I should have to do—and stepped up in my socks to sit beside him on the clean matting. Like a lark he rose, and sweetly shouting, "Goo-de mōning, Goo-de bai!" he scuttled away to the kitchen as quick as his legs could carry him. His mother made contrite apology, and Gōrō became my fast friend.

Dinner at seven: what long-to-be-remembered mortals have we come across at these *tables d'hôte* in Japan, sometimes sitting next an angel unannounced, and now and then the opposite. Such chance encounters are never forgotten in China or Japan: years afterwards, and thousands of miles away, they may meet again, but they are always old friends in a kind of immortal way, for they "hear the East a-calling." The picture fascinates; each familiar detail of a white man's meal stands out with tenfold definition here, because of the utterly contrasting background which throws it up in high relief: the metallic clatter of knives and forks, while the children in the lobby eat their supper of rice with noiseless wooden *hashi* (chop-sticks); the assertive entry of strident boots amongst the silent footfall of the *nésan* flitting to and fro (a Japanese waitress rarely fails to break into a trot when serving you); the extraordinary variety of facial feature and colour in our little party of twenty, as compared with the uniformity of black hair and

A TALE OF KARUIZAWA.

It was early in August 1897. I had been more than a year in Japan, and had not seen Karuizawa—an omission, I was told, which indicated both moral and mental obliquity. Mental, because Karuizawa spells Asama, the largest active volcano in Japan; and moral, because Karuizawa in summer means missionaries, who flock there from all points of the compass to revel in the upland air, to strengthen their bodies, and to question their souls as to what their Mission really is. So I hastened to set myself right, and one brilliant morning took the train at Uyenō and sped northwards out of glowing Tokyo heat.

Karuizawa is a rather English-looking moorland spot 3000 feet above the sea, in the very heart of Japan, some 90 miles to the west and north of Tokyo: it is about half-way on the Government line which crosses from one side of the island to the other. The first sixty miles we steam through level country, irrigated and glistening with a rich variety of crops; then leaving behind us Takasaki and the slow volume of the Tonegawa, we begin to rise rapidly from the fertile plain, as we ascend a deep valley which runs up into the everlasting hills; and now we stop for ten minutes at Yokokawa, in the heart of a beautiful picture. On the left towers a most dramatic escarpment, facing us like a spectacular mountain battlement: it is Miyōgisan,

with its jagged spires that crowd the sky in this region of purple shadows and dark indigo rifts of rock. Our engine is changed here, for the Abt rail begins, and we are lifted 2500 feet in the next seven miles. (This section cost the Government £30,000 per mile, a prodigious outlay in Japan.) We start away on our rack-rail climb, every window bristling with heads: the contrast is striking between the wild irregular beauty of the gorge and the clean simplicity of the line, soaring up with gentle bend to right or left; tunnel follows tunnel, and the air grows each minute easier as we mount "1 in 15": everywhere sumptuous depths of luxuriant wood, with waterfalls as common as paving-stones in a hot city. Now comes the final tunnel, right under the rampart face, a range which hereabouts for miles is split into deep-cleft pinnacles ("candles" the Japanese call them) and strange fantastic architectural forms. We emerge on an uninteresting featureless plain, covered with coarse grass instead of verdant plots of rice.

I stepped out on the little platform, thinking it terrible anti-climax, the most un-Japanese spot I had seen; just a few wooden houses near the station—was this the Karuizawa dear to so many foreigners? But the voice of a missionary was heard in the booking-office—and they often

prove very useful people. He kindly offered to escort me up a sandy road to the village, which lay a mile away. It was growing dusk when we entered the village street, some quarter-of-a-mile in length, and we might easily have passed by the "Manpei Hotel"—one of an inconspicuous wooden block—had there not been a couple of white tourists smoking out of a window on our right. No doubt of their nationality; that querulous soulless stare which is their way of saluting a new arrival: "O Lord!" it seems to say, "how long must we suffer Outsiders?" But the Head of the house knows how to make up for their deficiencies, as he hastens out to offer the proverbial "warmest welcome at an inn"; so does his young wife, spotlessly clean, up at five, the life and brain of the house, never sarcastic or "put out," the long day through alert and cheerful, and always on the spot, in spite of six young children to whom she is court of appeal at each tiniest *contre-temps*. She commands respect from every nationality, and can do anything except speak English—and that she probably can, but Japanese women, unlike men, shrink from a foreign language unless they can talk it properly. Her penultimate offspring, Gōrō, a boy of two, was sitting on the dais, noting the new imports with a satisfied air, and he now accosted me in an imperious tone, "*kochi oide nasai*" (please come here), extending his fat arm, and repeating the request, "*kochi ye o kake nasai*" (please sit here).

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black eyes in the population passing up and down the street; the more or less complaining expressions of the white folk lapped in every creature comfort, against the divine indifference (due to a coarse-grained nervous system, so the tipplers say in the Treaty Ports) of the sallow race who bear always a sunny countenance, whether the palate be tickled or no,—while, most conspicuous of all, at the white-skinned meal the woman comes not to minister, but to be ministered unto.

At this juncture, inspired by the excellent trout on my plate, I ventured to address again a lady on my right, who had met my advances with an irresponsible blank. She was an unmarried Englishwoman of about forty, hair almost white, a calm and kindly face, but an expression of such genuine unconcern as to arrest attention. She seemed to have weathered storms, and the ripples of a *table d'hôte* did not count in her calendar. Remarking to her on the merits of the fish, she replied, "Yes, I only came yesterday." She was exceedingly deaf, and I asked the twelve-year-old son of the house to look after her. As the meal proceeded she grew accustomed to the phrasing of my voice, and began to talk on her own account. "Do you know the country round here?" she asked. I said it was my first visit. Ah! she had been once before, last year, and to-morrow she must walk over to Kōse to see if she could find the spot where she lost herself last summer.

"Lost yourself?" I inquired; for the hills had appeared so much more open and free from forest than is usually the case in a landscape in Japan. I forgot the tall grass, dense and—when tall enough—more bewildering than any forest.

"Four days and nights absolutely lost, entirely alone for many miles; not a voice came near me, though I walked on and on the whole time: not a crumb to eat, but plenty of water, above and below."

She spoke in a quiet unimpassioned way, as if she were plotting out some needlework for a friend: whatever her narrative would be, it would not be of the Rougemont type.

The white people began to rise from their ample meal—a strenuous campaign in the eyes of the little handmaids—and filed away with Chinese solemnity, the men to smoke in the only public room, the ladies to chat in each other's rooms. This is doubtless a moving sight to a nation so steeped in convention as the Japanese, and, though the withdrawal of the sex may indicate some glimmer of propriety in Western female minds, it probably seems odd to them that the separation should occur at this particular stage, for Japanese women enjoy their pipe as much as men. (But what a pipe! as dainty as jewellery, with its tiny bowl and mouthpiece chased and polished bright.)

I went to sit in the entrance-hall, talking to a missionary from southern Formosa—for Karuizawa is in summer a cool magnetic spot, which draws

the Protestant clergy from all over Japan and even China. Gōrō stepped down from the domestic dais, slipped on his sandals, and came to watch us sip our coffee. He accepted a lump of sugar that I tendered in token of forgiveness, and was moving off with it—barely held between finger and thumb—to show his mother, but that observant slender matron promptly called, "*o jiggi nasai—nān da?*" ("make your bow—what are you thinking of?"): wherefore Black-Eyes returned and offered due acknowledgment, placing his two palms on the floor, and ducking his round head till it lay between them. Then he flew to his mother, who made much of him.

Outside in the village street a vertical summer rain was falling, too heavy for English taste. The villagers strode up and down on their high *géta*, the light from many-coloured lanterns scattered in twinkling points across the steaming road; each man, woman, or child walked demurely beneath his wide umbrella—a heavy structure of thick oiled paper, not the toy variety that travels West—with a cylindrical pendent halo dripping round him as he went. They stop and chat in the downpour rattling like hard peas on the stretched paper, talking with that good-humoured indifference to discomfort which so astounds a man of Western birth. Higher up the street were sounds of revelry, where a few cronies were tossing off their *saké* after the drudgery of the day; and round the corner, as in model

Christian lands, a little vice was having its innings. One thing we missed, for the voice of the Hooligan is not heard in Japan.

Within our wooden hostelry there was a rustle of skirts again, as the ladies came back to the lords. My deaf neighbour sat down with a missionary group in the porch, who begged her to tell how she lost herself last year on the hills. She began forthwith, in a contented unobtrusive tone.

"Yes, it was very curious. I had gone up to sleep at Kōse (a tiny spa four miles to the north on higher ground), and in the morning, as I walked alone on the path that leads to Kusatsu, there were such splendid wild-flowers growing near that I could not help turning off to pick them. You know how tall the grass becomes in summer, and how it looks like ordinary turf a mile away, because the top is all one height. Well, I strayed a few yards from the path, picking here and there, not noticing the grass was deeper every step, and when I had my arms full I turned to get back to the path. Of course I could not see it, for the grass rose above my head; but I felt certain I was retracing my steps the way I came, and in any case it was only a matter of a hundred yards or so. However, no path came, so I pushed through the tangle in another direction. Almost instantly I felt sick, as you do at the beginning of an earthquake, for, though I must be quite near to the path, yet

with grass all round above my eyes there was no knowing what would happen: I might be going right away at that very moment, and the possibilities came like a shock. I believe I lost my head at once; I could not think, so I kept moving one way, then another. But simply pushing through this tall tough grass is very tiring work, even if you are on sloping ground and can judge where you will come out; and when it is level all round you, the heart is taken out of you, from the feeling that every step is probably burying you deeper. It is like being in a maze, with no one to show the way out; only this maze lasted miles, for all I knew."

"Could you not attract any one's notice by shouting?" the audience wished to know.

"I did shout, several times, but you see there are no cottages near, nor cultivated fields, so that it is not often any one would be going along the path; besides, buried in that grass, it would be difficult to judge where a voice came from; and then, if they heard, they would not pay much attention, as I could not speak Japanese. The heat was so stifling too, that the more effort I made the more suffocated I felt; and, since whichever way I faced I could see no view but the forest of grass stems shutting me in, and could get no fresh air on my face, I soon burnt like a fever. Though it was blazing sunshine overhead, I was more helpless than an infant in a dark room, for there were no

sights or sounds to steer me out."

"But," we persisted, "surely some one at Kōse, Japanese or foreigner, must have heard if you had kept on calling."

"I thought so too, but no reply came to my shouts, and my voice is not a very powerful one: besides, each fresh time that I shouted and there was no answer, I grew more scared, and thought I should go mad. I looked at my watch, and only half an hour ago I was on the open path, quite at home,—now I was caught in a trap, cut off from help; for in which direction did it lie? and without any clue to guide my struggles. It was like being drowned, only not in nice clear water, but drowning choked by miles of hideous overlapping grass: it closed in tight behind me as I pushed my way, and there was no chance of an outlook with it up above my head. (By setting to work to tear up armfuls of the grass, and making a mound to stand upon, she might perhaps have gained a view and sighted some landmark that would set her a course; but the stems are so stiff and serrated that they easily make the hands bleed.) If I had been a foot taller I should have laughed and been out in a minute or two; but those few inches buried me alive."

She smiled, and added, "You think I was very foolish to be done so quickly; but I had lost my presence of mind, it was so sudden and preposterous—just to pick a few flowers, and be snatched from my surroundings

in that creepy way. I had never had such an experience in China, and Japan was a new world to me: I lost my wits, and moved madly here and there as if I were a caged animal. But what would you have done?"

We thought that, if there was nothing to indicate where Kōse lay, the best thing would have been simply to choose one line and plod straight on till she emerged from the jungle; for it would not extend more than two or three miles without a break.

And this, it appeared, was what she laid herself out to do, though with no such quick deliverance: after an hour or two of stifling labour, without food or drink, she probably began to circle round instead of making bee-line progress. She had but a murky memory left of that excruciating day; it was one great volume of scare with no relieving incident: perpetual untiring grass, and her perpetual toil inside it. . . . The hours passed by, and there she was still labouring like a squirrel in a cage; grass against civilisation, and fool's-mate to the heir of all the ages. Her head was buzzing horribly, and her whole body was painfully tense from the everlasting pressure of wiry stems. . . . At last the sun was low in the sky, . . . and as it began to set—she quietly walked out on to open ground, and instantaneously fell down in a heap.

When she regained consciousness it was already dark, and stars kept watch over the wild uplands of Shinano. (She was

4000 or 5000 feet above the sea.) There were no trees around, only occasional patches of scrub, and the open area seemed to extend some miles: it was exceedingly still, and she could not hear any sounds of living things; worst of all, there was no long-imagined music of water,—for she was above the slopes. Considering that it was only the fourth day since she landed in Japan, she was certainly well inside: and now in this utter solitude, weak from want of food, those indescribable faint tastes and odours in the air, which distinguish every land from others (we never notice them unless we are alone), streamed through and saturated her; she *felt* Japan, as if she had known the country ever since its cosmic birth. She grew light-headed, no longer scared or tense with feverish strain; and as she walked to and fro in the dark, the concrete facts of tiny Kōse nestling in its trees, and Karuizawa with its cosmopolitan picnic far below, faded off into oblivion: texts from "the Bible"—records of old Asiatic experience—took their place, and she repeated them aloud again and again while she paced her lonely beat on Far Eastern hills. "A very present help in trouble"—she spoke it quite clearly, so that she might be sure some one had said it: well, she was certainly in trouble, and it was bound to come right. Was she not even now extricated from that sickening grass, breathing easily and unafraid? In dreamy content with the open breeze, she sat down on some peat, and

sleep covered up her utter exhaustion.

She slept soundly, because the nightmare of the grass was left behind: had she not escaped from it before dark she must have gone out of her mind that night. The coming of the tranquil dawn awoke her, and she found she was dripping with dew, but this was welcome to her long-parched lips. Nerveless and aching though she was, she could not remain sitting in such a plight, so she rose and went forward with the gentle drop of the watershed. She was too empty and foot-sore (for she had started in thin shoes) to think out any programme: but presently she caught that sound which is never forgotten, the melody of a watercourse when one is past all effort. She stopped a full hour by the bubbling brook, till strength returned and gave her some mental grip of the situation. On every side of her for empty miles lay the upland undulations, beautiful in the morning sun, but to her an unbefriending blank. She would cling to this stream, follow it with a single eye, and before the day is done it will bring her surely to some human outpost. Could she walk so far? it was all downhill, beside a sparkling brook whose cadences will soothe her blistered brain. . . . So the whole day long she carried out this plan, picturing

nothing but the human voices at the end. The sun blazed hotter and hotter as she toiled through weary hours by the splashing stream, ever dropping to lower levels: she had sunk out of sight of the far-spread, echoless moorland view that met her eyes at dawn, and the deepening valley wound interminably on in a narrower silence. She knew there would be no cows or sheep to make the shaggy slopes companionable; not once did she hear or see any sign of man or the works of man.¹ Even birds were few and far between, and when they flitted across her path it was with a noiseless beating of the wing, like decorous servants in a spacious house. (Footsteps in a Japanese house are nearly inaudible, dogs are rarely noisy, and the birds in like manner seem to live on tiptoe as they circle and dive through the brilliant air—stealing runs, as it were—in furtive flights.) Once she thought she really heard a labourer call; but she turned the next bend, and the voice flew away: it was only a peewit telephoning home.

As she grew weaker with each passing hour, the stream at her side grew stronger; its note had changed from the dancing treble of the heights to a weighty undertone, as it swept in deeper volume under overshadowing hills. It was less companionable now that

¹ In Japan less than a fourth of the whole surface is cultivated; thus there are many wide areas of forbidding solitude. Sheep cannot graze, because the serrated grass causes hemorrhage internally, and cattle for the same reason are mostly fed indoors.

it was more masterful; the journey beside it hourly became more painful, for the edge of the river was getting strewn with the *débris* of last June. Stumbling hard against one of these great stones that littered her path, she suddenly discovered that her shoes were altogether gone; some time ago they had deserted her,—and again the iron entered deep into her soul. Both feet were bruised and bleeding, swollen from *buyu* bites (a small sand-fly that leaves a poisonous wound), burning and aching, rigid if she stopped for rest; and yet there was no sign of the goal. . . . The yellowing light reminded her it was now two days since she tasted a grain of food; but what was that in front, on which its level rays struck full with such a callous glare? Before she could actually distinguish the details she stopped dead, as if stunned, for she discerned a culminating cruel blow: from the valley-slopes on her right—she had taken the right bank of the stream—there surged abruptly vertical out of the moorland grass a wall of naked rock, which thrust itself into the swirling flood a precipitous headland bar. The stream swung sharply round the polished base to the left,—but she was once more fool's-mated. One glance at that depth of rushing water, and she knew she was marooned for another night, the winding clue turned traitor, after she had followed its weary bends (and with what torture) all that silent summer day. Each minute the dear

light lessened in this far-away hollow of the vast unwitting world: she looked for some way of escape by mounting up on the right and rounding the protuberance in its rear; but the slopes that darkened over her were a chaos of rough, steep, marshy ground, without a trace of human track to give her heart for the climb. If she could climb, it might be into that tall grass again; but it was no use trying, the last of her feeble strength had gone with the light: it was better to sit down, and die quietly in the dark.

Texts forsook her too in this hour of need, or came only in fragments, useless as broken glasses when one wants to read. She must have crouched motionless, empty of thought or feeling, for an hour or two under that impassive crag, her worn-out eyes gazing with a blind appeal at those faithful points of starlight steady behind the clouds that drifted down the sky: they held her like a mirage, for her brain had been full of the twinkling lights of the imagined hamlet she would come upon ere night. Then, like other mirages, this one went; the sky turned thick as lead, and it began to rain. No English shower was this, but a deluge of a large and generous type, huge as the vast Pacific whence it hailed; all night the hissing flood rushed down as straight as shot, without a gust or intermittent lull, calmly unhasting as an Oriental when he settles to a patient piece of work. Behind her the cruel cliff ran rivulets, and the

ground in front echoed with life as the surface seethed in a froth of shivered drops: the river might have been far away, so drowned was its voice in the roar of rain. She rose to make sure of its existence, and when she reached the inaudible current, a strange whim seized her suddenly. Taking off bodice and hat, she walked in up to her waist, standing in a pool outside the suck of the stream, and she turned her face right up to the hiss of the resounding gloom. . . . The incessant sting of the rainfall on her skin was saving her reason and life; by degrees she felt as unperturbed as she had been on that Kōse path ages ago; the more the rain dashed down the calmer beat her pulse, her fevered fancies died away, and a whole text rose from the dark and stood before her plain (our cherished "texts"—had they not all an Asiatic birth?): "There is no man that hath left home, or wife, or brothers and sisters, or parents, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this time, and in the time to come eternal life." Well, she did most of that some years ago, when she first went out to bury herself among the crowded yellow faces of a Chinese city deep inland. Then the more poignant saying came word for word distinct above the storm: "If any man come unto me, and hate not his own father and mother, and wife and children, brothers and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." To

night she was reft from all her friends as utterly as if she hated them: she was out of humanity's reach, as wholly as if in another world. That sphinx-like rock had out off human help, and now she was indeed alone. . . . She stood quite still, keenly aware, responsive to the Real Presence; and soon she felt strangely at home. The earth must turn its back on our sun before the constant stars can be seen; and "man's extremity is God's opportunity."

She said she stood in the swelling river all that night, heeding the heavy unrelenting rain as little as gossamer, untroubled by thoughts of the morrow, unconscious of aches or bodily exhaustion. . . . She remembered it was pouring hard when dawn stole in; but the interminable clamour ceased soon afterwards, and a quiet world began to glisten out in luminous relief. Feeling as if that vigil of rain had severed her from her previous life and launched her on a new existence, she stepped from the bed of the stream, and unconcernedly took off her clothes—for they were drenched, though it made no impression on her. Without ulterior aim—most things were unimportant now—but moved by inherited instinct, she spread them on large flat stones to dry; then relapsed into living over again those silent realities of the night. Hours passed, and she idly noticed that the garments were quite dry; the sun was very hot, and she quietly dressed again.

There stood that headland blocking the curve ahead; clearly the thing to do is to turn one's back on it, and walk in the opposite direction. She was no longer scared or torn by whirls of thought; her programme was laid down by logic, unswayed by emotion, and she breathed on a higher plane half insulated from the touch of common sensory things, because during the night a merciful cushion had been interposed; she walked the riverside unstirred within, as a missile cleaves the air. Scale that promontory? no, not with naked feet inflamed like these (the remains of the stockings had been discarded, and blood-poisoning had set in); it would be ridiculous to attempt it, with a body destitute of strength. Much wiser to go back with the stream, for that is a definite route, and, though uphill, it is a gradual ascent; in a crippled condition easy gradients are to be preferred. (No thought arose that it would be retracing the terrible toil of yesterday; simply there was the stream, and up its valley lay the obvious route.)

And thus she entered on the pitiless third day of her unnoticed drift—travel, indeed, in the true sense of the word. The valley had enchained her with its silence coming down; it was doubly silent going up, for now she was quite deaf. While straining through the midnight storm to absorb the voice from Heaven, she had lost the power of focussing nearer sounds on earth; and an observer, had there been any, of that desolate

ascent, would have seen a solitary figure patiently working its way to higher ground; painfully crippled to the outer eye, yet ever moving forward with a calm continuance that gave the impression of ease. Her eye never wandered from the narrowing stream, but its music was inaudible; she saw nothing in its sparkling course, not even when shadows of white cumulus cloud that drifted overhead shone mirrored a moment in some placid pool, like silky continents of fairyland, or a forest of tufted foliage-crease. At intervals throughout the long ascent she stooped to rinse her mouth, then on again as a matter of course: man does not live by bread alone—how much less women. Not hunger or thirst possessed her mind, but a single instinct ruled her steps, to attain the open levels of the watershed. Though the track was a *via crucis* to her wounded feet, she planted them firmly and walked erect, a serene automaton smiling at pain: she noticed the blood, the sinister discoloration of the joints,—that should not be; but her soul was outside such petty incidents, and she kept her way unruffled by the sight.

Panting and trembling in every limb, she found herself at last emerging in full view of the illimitable upland panorama. Down in the west a world of rugged outlines rose and fell in far-away peaks of velvet indigo edge, against a deepening glory of crimson sky. A few miles in front Asama blocked the air, and as the twi-

light tints died out its summit flickered with the glow of that reverberating furnace in its depths; while wreaths of tight-curved issuing smoke slowly unrolled and spread themselves lazily down the mountain flank, with a pungent waft of sulphur borne to the terrace where she stood. The evening and the morning were the third day: it was a marvellous expanse of silence that she saw; was any of it real? The sulphur smell recalled her to the earth, and the uplifted shape of the great volcano seemed to rouse some instinct of locality in her dried-up brain. She did not reason that because the sun had set on her right therefore her homeward route lay more or less ahead. Asama led her unawares, Asama that dominates the Karuizawa sky, the first sight looked for in the morning air when the missionary steps outside his little house, and wonders what delightful walk will shape itself to-day. . . . She suddenly screamed aloud, again and again, with all her strength: not shrieks of fright, but of mere relief, an unconscious effort to tear herself from the nightmare that had suffocated her so long, from its conspiracy of silence and benumbing Arctic desolation. She never sat down at all that night, but strode painfully southwards through the scrub, hurling her cries incessantly as she went, a sheer animal protest against the outrageous situation in which she found herself. (She said that she screamed with reckless disregard—but so each one of us believes when he is making

very mediocre groans at the waking climax of an ordinary domestic nightmare.) But she pushed on, tense as steel; and while her shouts at regular intervals startled the midnight air, the tiny *buyu* never ceased to bite the swollen feet, and hour after hour on Asama's summit the red glow flickered like some labouring forge of a greater world. . . . As daylight opened up the branches of the trees she left off screaming; her throat was fearfully dry. She veered to and fro in search of a pool, but none was visible: this day was going to be the hottest of all—as she noted the depth of the shadows on her path, and the solid blue of the heaven above. The ground was getting strewn with cindery dust and gravel: there had once been a forest where she walked, but only charred stumps now remained to tell the tale of the big eruption 120 years ago, and the ravages were half concealed by a dainty growth of greenest slender underwood.

Wondering to find she moved so frictionless through this, she discovered she was on a track, —a living human path at last. Great fires of feeling began to surge, for the first time she staggered in her walk; the path emerged from out the copse; coarse grass redeemed by splendid flowers—the vivid gentian blue, and sumptuous lilies white—came into the foreground on her left. In a flash the steel casing dropped from her heart and brain, and she quivered helplessly. That Japanese hut, a hundred yards ahead! It is the very cottage

where she slept; can she possibly get there? Instantly she framed her shrivelled lips to pronounce the two words *midzu-kudasai* ("water, please,"—the only ones she knew), and repeating them with desperate tenacity—for she felt she would be speechless soon—she aimed herself wildly at the little shed, tottered with a stumbling knock against the door, stood, swaying, while the woman hurried out, spoke the two words into her soul, and fell in a heap across the threshold.

"And is there care in Heaven?"

a poet asked three hundred years ago;

"There is: else much more wretched
were the cace
Of men than beasts,"

because man needs care more; the havoc is greater in his "cace." There is also care in the remotest corners of this earth; as Mungo Park experienced when sick in the unknown Niger land, and as travellers find in every "savage" tribe to-day. We can leave her in that hut secure, for where on earth would she meet with more devoted care, combined with deft delight in rendering help, than when intrusted to a woman of Japan—passion and competence of a unique blend. In Japan they do not spell "pity" with a capital P, nor do they find it necessary to maintain a Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children, which shall number its convictions of inhuman parents by thous-

ands every year. Living remote from the long-illuminated West, and uninformed of the *Spectator*-ial discovery¹ that pity is a "Christian product," unknown before the birth of Christ, and unknown now in extra-Christian lands, they are free without impropriety to go on practising it daily in their unassuming way, in the common-sense manner of their race, not lavishing it with public blandishment on paltry cats or idle dogs, but reserving it *par excellence* "for all young children." This is a nation not much given to adoration of Ideas: they like the homely Fact far better. Kindness, they think, should begin with one's own kind; and certainly the Japanese children are a charming sight which seems to justify the untutored bias of their gentle mothers.

About 9 A.M. on the second day of The Test a string of pack-horses lunched clumsily down the Karuizawa street; at the "Manpei Hotel" a countryman slipped off, and bowing himself in—with apologetic hand in front held like a deferential wedge—between the white men smoking there, begged for a word with the honourable Head. In low brief sentences repeated he explained that the foreign lady who arrived at his cottage the night before last had not been seen since the morning-meal of yesterday. She had not meant to stay away, because she took nothing with her, not even an umbrella for

¹ Published on the 21st of July 1900.

the sun. Had the Head any honourable news of the lady? or perhaps he was not alarmed, since he had such intimate acquaintance with manners and habits of foreign folk who travel?

But the Head was considerably perturbed by this message from the moorland wastes. The lady had been his guest, and it was he who had made the arrangements for her trip to Kōse; and his Japanese blood, inheriting three centuries of the Tokugawa *régime* of responsibility, curdled at the thought that trouble had befallen her. He called his wife, who came out from the kitchen (how could so small a kitchen furnish such a varied meal?) with round arms bare, and to her he imparted the distressing news — in the unemotional tone of a *chef* discussing commissariat.

There was not much dawdling after that. Before the foreigners had finished their cigars the word had gone forth that every able-bodied villager could have a job and earn his 30 sen (7½d.) by joining the rescue-party to scour the heights all day. Seated on the rice-straw mats in the very heart of the arrangements, Master Gōrō promptly entered into the spirit of affairs, and climbing straightway on to the back of the head jinriki-man, announced his readiness to start at once. Tarō, the eldest boy, skilled in the hardest Chinese ideographs, and quite at home with ordinary English talk, begged earnestly that he might have a day off

too, "for," said he, "they cannot speak to her when they find her, but I can." His father bade him stay in the house. How could the foreigners' meals be properly served if he were not at his usual post to place their wine or beer beside their plate within a few seconds of the order given, and to keep his sharp head fixed with nimble eye on the whims of that peppery gentleman from Dokkani.

Thus at ten o'clock the village expedition sallied forth — a chorus of "*sō desū? dōmo!*" (eh? dear, dear!) in its rear — equipped with food and a supply of lanterns in case of need, taking with them also visions of liberal *saké* at the happy ending of their quest. They rounded the corner to the left, and Karuizawa resumed its sunny repose, except where some active men and maids defied the sun with lawn-tennis, while missionary boys and girls careered on bicycles.

Soon after dark the Head and some of his men returned, more serious than they went; the lady had vanished utterly, without a trace of her wanderings. Most of the searchers stayed in the neighbourhood of Kōse, sleeping by turns and scouting far and wide with shouts and many-coloured lanterns held aloft on bamboo poles above the grass. Then the heavy rain came down and stopped proceedings for the night, — that night which she spent waist-deep in the stream beneath the cliff. With the early light of the third day a rein-

forcement of searchers arrived. The whole band was now scattered along every point of the compass, and the moors became eloquent with weirdest cries. The searchers themselves grew keener as the issue appeared more desperate; and the lady was not—as she thought—the only one who tramped and screamed all night in view of Asama's peak. But in such waste land a solitary figure is as hard to find—especially when deaf—as the needle in the hay; so, in spite of their fantastic shouts, she had slipped through their lines and reached the bourne alone. Indeed, long after she had been washed and tended by the happy woman in the hut, and by a Japanese doctor brought from Karuizawa, the straggling knots of rescuers were pushing farther and farther away from rejoicing Kōse.

The lady's eyes opened about sunset, when she saw a white-faced woman sitting patiently by her side; she did not recognise that it was one of her fellow-workers, but simply asked for "tea." They gave her a cup of hot milk-and-water, which satisfied her so that she speedily fell asleep again. Her feet had looked so horrible that her friends had several hours before wired to the big Scotsman in Tokyo begging that he would come the ninety miles at once. The message reached him as he returned for tea to his pretty house on the bank of the Sumida, after a long day's work through endless Tokyo streets, with ther-

mometer at 95°; but though no light weight, he was ever the readiest of emergency men. He filled his bag, took another four miles of jinrikisha to Uyenō Station, and the midnight train turned him out in cool Karuizawa. Not much after dawn he was with the lady in the Kōse hut.

She had recovered consciousness, and was not a bit dismayed by the doctor's serious view of the case. He said she must be moved at once, and, if possible, get down to Yokohama that very evening, where he would see her safe in hospital. So in a *kago*—a sort of hammock slung from a bamboo pole, the immemorial conveyance in Japan before the jinrikisha came in '72—carried by two of the search-party, she was smoothly borne to Karuizawa, placed in the noonday train, and at dinner-time was surrounded by white men's faces in the white man's hospital, looking out on the far-travelled ships in that deep blue bay. Next morning the medical staff urged amputation of both feet, in the hope of arresting fatal mischief. But she would not hear of it; she was inflexible, not from vanity, but because of the new-born atmosphere of assurance that seemed to buoy her since the night in the storm. Those feet, she said, had done so much for her in her hour of need; she could not now discard them, she would rather take her chance. With grave misgivings the doctors had to submit. But her confidence was justi-

fied, and in a fortnight she was strolling on the Bund, as unconcerned as the youngest clerk from the H. and S. Bank.

This was the end of her tale. She had had to leave Japan just after her recovery, and had only now been able to pay her second visit. To-morrow she must walk up to Kōse, and renew acquaintance with the landscape that had entered so into her life. She would like to see if she could find the exact spot where she was suddenly kidnapped: the very grass-stems, grating in the breeze, had an irresistible fascination.

Breakfasting early next morning, — porridge handed hot at 6 A.M., — I strolled outside to reconnoitre where I was by daylight. The charm of Karuizawa lies in its open space of moor, its elbow-room so rare in a country where villages are mostly crowds, and also in its tonic air, limpid from its remoteness, its very touch conveying a sense of rest to the fagged arrivals from the teeming coast of the Pacific. Most of these consist of missionaries and their families, who converge every summer from hundreds of miles away to this high ground, "in order to seek that renewed vigour of body and soul without which our ministrations can have little success amid the daily obstacles that confront us in an alien land." They also enjoy up here the unaccustomed treat of continuous trifling intercourse with mem-

bers of their own race: the village is such a tiny one that the native population is quite swamped by the vivacious whites; thus their stay at Karuizawa (lasting two or three months every year) brings them some of the cheery effect of "going Home." Every day there are picnic ascents on the hills, or wanderings down steep paths (*sed revocare gradum!*) in the depths of delicious woods; now and then comes a romantic expedition to climb Asama by night, peer into the swirling pit of flame, and try to keep warm till the wonderful Dawn shall disclose the myriad peaks of Japan: tea, tennis tournaments, and religious services divide the remainder of their time, with an occasional graver conference, at which undaunted puzzled hearts bring forward better methods for "the evangelisation of the unique and stubborn race among whom our lot is cast." In fact they have a thoroughly good time, right through the summer months; and who would grudge it them? unless perhaps the perspiring merchant down in his Treaty Port, who rarely gets more than a fortnight holiday, — besides being a mere unheroic sinner into the bargain. Walking through the unstirred pool of heat that fills the Tokyo streets in August, I have often missed familiar Protestant figures in the Christian quarters of the city; and their absence during the long *doyō* (dog-days) served only to accentuate the worn black garments of the

Roman Catholic men and women who moved slowly to and fro at their endless work among the poor: high or low thermometer is all the same to them ("unmarried people need no change"), whose *liaison* with the comforts of this life is of the very least,—and holidays deferred.

But we have wandered from the village street at early morn. Karuizawa was formerly—up to that distant date, when primary education was established in England—a posting-station (fifty men and fifty horses kept) on the great Nakasendō, the road which runs inland from Tokyo to Kyōto, while the more frequented Tōkaidō links the two capitals by a route which hugs the Pacific coast. The inhabitants gained their living almost entirely from their services to noble travellers on the road: but when in 1868 a few young *Samurai* dissolved the feudal system, and so relieved the Daimios from the obligation of their periodical journeys to Yedo, and when a little later railways came, with hours instead of days, Karuizawa people—like too many others in Japan just then—were altogether adrift, left to shift for themselves. Then some missionaries discovered that the site was exactly what they wanted as a summer resort, houses cheap to hire or build, service in plenty, and surroundings so primitive that they might live in a free-and-easy way, without the fear of invasion by fashionable tourists who would

make things dear and strike a discordant note in the calm retreat.

Thus a phoenix village rose on the ruin of the irrevocable past: presently, as summer set in down below, butchers' meat and Western "groceries" came up, exhibited behind glass windows, to the amazement of the old inhabitants; then, as Western comforts grew more common, until actual cows were kept *and milked*, wives and children of business-men in the Ports were consigned to swell the missionary group; in '93 the Government built the many-tunnelled Abt-rail track, and Karuizawa became a station on a trunk-line connecting the two seas; when the "Manpei Hotel" was opened (with a signboard painted in foreign letters) and *table d'hôte* was naturalised, the coddled tourist thought that he must have "a look in" too, just to see if Asama really were as "active" as they said; while quite recently even Japanese gentlemen of high degree have begun to build houses and introduce their families. As in so many other cases, the world followed the lead of the missionaries. Foreigners are now the *raison d'être* of Karuizawa, and no echo of Feudalism haunts the hills; the former pomp of the Nakasendō—with its chronic injustice—is forgotten, and the black-eyed children of to-day barely look at the rack-rail engine being shunted on or off the crowded trains, as if it had been always so. Asama (eight miles distant from the station, 8000 feet above the sea) alone

remains unaltered by the dramatic upheaval in the life of the nation spread below; it has not been stirred to mark the new era by any eruption, but contents itself with an occasional extra growl, and waft of fine dust down to the roses miles away on missionary lawns. In any other country than Japan it would be strange that an obscure benighted moorland hamlet should have been so quickly changed into a cosmopolitan centre, so up-to-date that the voice of the gramophone may be heard in its street, and spirited placards like the following¹ appeal to the maternal foreign eye:—

HerE
 HIGHEst qnALiLy
 COM
 sVpORT ALONE
 TtEBEforE mUch FHeqUEML
 mITX
 In PrOmp DeLiVEE
 aL
 uterWOst Swal pRICE
 the cvcRy DAY

(The middle-class Anglo-Saxon shouts for joy; but what would he not give to be able to express his meaning in Japanese half as well as these peasants do in English.)

About ten o'clock the lady was ready to start, and we made up an escort of five or six. An hour's ascending path brought us to Kōse, a peaceful hamlet in a hollow of the

hills, a cluster of small houses that cater for visitors who come to bathe, with a very limpid brook babbling music through the trees. As we arrived, an exciting incident occurred. An English lady on a handsome Australian mare was waiting to ride back to Karuizawa, when one of a string of pack-horses tethered near broke loose, and her steed began to career wildly. A Cambridge man who had come with us to botanise leapt forward like the handy man he was, and deftly drew her out of the danger which seemed imminent. Children of every age ran out to inspect the commotion, but speedily turned their attention on us instead: a boy of eighteen months made his mother transfer him to my shoulders, where he reigned and approvingly pulled my hair, as though he had known me in some previous existence. When we see the extraordinary ease with which this race "make up to" foreigners, we are the more impressed by the ability of the Tokugawa rule, which for two and a half centuries found no difficulty in maintaining such an absolute seclusion. We sat down on the placid sward and ate our lunch, enhanced by Kirui beer just cooled in the rapid brook: the Lady had walked away, begging to be allowed to go alone to identify that crucial spot; so the Botanist laid out his specimens while

¹ "Here highest quality Cow support alone, therefore much frequent Milk in prompt delivery at uttermost small price the every day." The nation is noted for its economy of material, and with care a little type will go a long way.

he smoked a good cigar (choice Manila, price 1d.), and in the sleepy calm of that oasis of deep content we felt more like citizens of the world than superior natives of a peerless isle ten thousand miles away. The shadows had grown before she returned, tranquil as the woods around: she had not seen any sign of the starting-point she sought; the unkempt coarse-grained grass that met her gaze stared dull indifference to the question in her eye. We told her this was as it should be; great works of Art admit of no *encore*.

We were preparing to go home, when some American ladies kindly asked us in to a cup of tea in a tiny house they

occupied. Amongst them was a girl of fifteen, with frank wistful eyes and beautiful white throat, who waited on us casual strangers with a sweet intensity of care that appealed to us all. She was there to try what the baths could do: and now

“in silence she reposes”

where the white-crossed burial slope, which broods so still above busy Yokohama bay, has covered with its cosmopolitan turf that young transparent face. One was taken, the other was left; but I never saw either again. Yet “ships that pass in the night” in Japan are not forgotten, however brief the encounter.

ERNEST FOXWELL.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

'THE QUARTERLY REVIEW'—ITS ORIGIN—THE SLASHING ARTICLE—THE REIGNS OF GIFFORD AND LOCKHART—THE APPOINTMENT OF WHITWELL ELWIN—REVIEWING *VERSUS* JOURNALISM—THE UNPROFESSIONAL CRITIC—THE FATES OF BOOKS—'THE EXEMPLARY NOVELS.'

THERE is no more curious nor more characteristic episode in the literary history of these times than the decline in influence of the great reviews. Fifty years ago an article in the 'Edinburgh' or 'Quarterly' was enough to make the fortune of a book or to wreck a Government. Our leisurely fathers tasted their literature with deliberate care, and refused to hear the voice of panic agitation, so that the life of a book was more than a week, and a new policy was long discussed before it was inaugurated. To-day another fashion prevails. For the public all things are out of date in three months—or in three hours. Even the wisdom of a leading article is generally resented as superfluous by readers, who, having read the day's news by nine, are restless until eleven o'clock brings them the first edition of the evening paper. News, indeed, as a profound authority has lately told us, to be popular, must be brief, well-displayed, and without comment. We are forced regretfully to have confidence in the authority; yet we cannot but marvel that a mere half-century has com-

pletely transformed the mind of man.

To those optimists who believe in the perfectibility of mankind, this revolution in taste must have come as something of a shock. Maybe, in contemplating the best of all possible worlds they forget the encroachment of the snippet, but history has a long memory, and the publication of such a work as the excellent 'Memoir' of Whitwell Elwin, which prefaces his 'XVIII. Century Men of Letters,'¹ makes uncertainty impossible. It is but forty years ago that Elwin resigned the editorship of the 'Quarterly,' and in his hands it still availed to startle the country, and to shake its Government. But Elwin, it must be remembered, was only a link in the chain of tradition. Admirable though his qualities were, he was no inventor. The 'Quarterly' came to him as Gifford, Coleridge, and Lockhart had shaped it, and though in some ways he was better suited to the post than any of his predecessors, he differed little from them either in the ambition which he cherished or in the effect which he produced.

¹ Some XVIII. Century Men of Letters. Biographical Essays by the Rev. Whitwell Elwin, sometime editor of the 'Quarterly Review,' with a Memoir by his son, Warwick Elwin. London: John Murray.

To understand Elwin's achievement a retrospect is necessary: the 'Quarterly' was established by Mr Murray—in 1808—as a counterblast to the trumpet of Jeffrey and the 'Edinburgh.' In the days when literature and politics were so closely confused, that Whig and Tory each believed his opposite incapable of telling the truth, or of writing sound English, it was essential that each party should have what was called its "organ"; and with commendable courage Murray determined that Jeffrey and his friends should not have it all their own way. His first step was to detach Sir Walter Scott from the 'Edinburgh,'—a step that was easy to take, since the Wizard was already irremediably offended by the violent criticism of the Saffron and Blue. And no sooner was Sir Walter detached than he threw all his energy and all his enthusiasm into the new project. If the design was Murray's, the actual work of shaping it was undoubtedly Sir Walter's, who not only collected articles and contributors, but inspired Gifford with a proper sense of an editor's duties. Indeed, the whole party had a hand in the new enterprise. If the great Canning could not lend his name, he could at least lend his brain, and the voice of the statesman often dictated, when Gifford or George Ellis held the pen. Thus fortified by the confidence of the Government, supported by the loyal aid of Sir Walter, and controlled by the editorial vigil-

ance of Gifford, the 'Quarterly' achieved an immediate success. As the success increased, so did the generosity of the publisher, and editor and contributors were alike rewarded on a scale which might well fill the modern man of letters with envy. Nor did this generosity go without its reward; the contributors not only gave of their best, but accepted the correction of Gifford, their Aristarchus, without too much complaining. From the very first the editor of the 'Quarterly' claimed his full privilege of cutting and changing. It was his motto, and the motto of his immediate successors, that the contributors were of far less importance than the 'Review.' They did not find in Mr Murray's "organ" a pleasant hostelry where their essays might pause awhile on the road to publication. And all such contributors as did not obey the rules of the house, and accept the views of its landlord, were very soon sent about their business. In other words, Gifford set his hand and his seal upon every article submitted to him. During the many years of his editorship he contributed but one essay to the 'Review,' and that was written in collaboration with Barron Field; but he transformed so many articles, he inserted so many pages of his own dogmatic composition, that he was from beginning to end the real spirit of the 'Quarterly'; and when Hazlitt attacked him for articles which he had not written, he was abundantly justified by the editor's autocratic system. Whether Gifford's sys-

tem was good or bad it is difficult to decide. On the one hand, it is a signal advantage for a review to profess a uniform policy, and to be written in a uniform style. Influence, like rumour, *crescit eundo*, and it increases more rapidly if it is always pointed towards the same goal. So the 'Quarterly' conquered its public the more speedily because every page proclaimed the same policy of loyalty towards the Government and of hatred against the other side. But, on the other hand, an editor who undertakes to make every article which he prints his own involves himself in many difficulties. Contributors whose articles are out grow discontented, and a discontented team is difficult to drive. Moreover, he who knows that what he writes will assuredly go through the editorial mill does not always castigate his style as he should; and the frequent complaints made by Murray and Gifford that it was wellnigh impossible to find men of letters who could write were in part the logical result of their own policy. So the archives are packed with the letters of indignant contributors, who resent the editor's blue-pencil, and the varying attitude of men of letters is a curious index of their vanity. Southey could not endure that his manuscript should be touched, though he confesses that he wrote in haste and knew not the proverb *manum de tabulâ*. When once mounted, he allowed his steed to caracole at large

over the plain of prolixity; but he did not easily endure that this caracolling should be noticed by others, and he was full of resentment when his steed was suddenly brought to a standstill. Scott, on the other hand, who might have claimed a privilege denied to Southey, resented nothing. He submitted to Lookhart, as he had submitted to Gifford, with the best possible grace; yet he is of the few who suffered the editor's interference patiently, and thus proved his magnanimity in small things as in great.

From the very first the 'Quarterly' earned the reputation, already acquired by the 'Edinburgh,' of "slashing" its opponents. On this subject there have been many exaggerations, and not a few false statements. We have heard of poets slaughtered by a review, and of critics all mixed of vinegar and gall. When Borrow was asked to contribute to the 'Quarterly,'—"never," said he; "I have made a resolution never to have anything to do with such a black-guard trade." This retort expressed a general opinion, and the wits were busy against the critics, who not only executed their victims but "quartered" them. These wholesale charges were not justified by the 'Review.' With certain limitations the 'Quarterly' was scrupulously fair. Allowance must be made for the habit of abuse which prevailed at the time, and for the political prejudice which too often prevented a faithful

understanding of literature. Croker, for instance, was a dishonest critic in precisely the same sense that Macaulay was a dishonest critic, though not even Croker was ever quite so cynical as Macaulay in confessing his dishonesty. Nevertheless, it was Croker and his "Attic salt" which gave the 'Quarterly' its bad name. Not content with taking *omne ignotum pro absurdo* in his own articles, the ingenious Secretary to the Admiralty was permitted to sprinkle the articles of others from his pepper-box of abuse. France, for instance, was his special province. Nobody was allowed to write of this country without his intervention; and Lord Stanhope—to give but one example—was almost alienated from the 'Review' by the havoc wrought upon his dignified prose by Croker's sprightly humour. Yet, when all allowances are made, the 'Quarterly' may boast a record of justice, and under Lockhart, at any rate, it was always ready to make public confession of its error. The fact that Lockhart was unable to see the beauty of Tennyson's early poems made him the more desirous in later years to do the poet justice; and if we forget its constant Crokerism we shall find that, where politics did not blind, the 'Quarterly' was candid even in its errors.

After the brief reign of John Coleridge, Lockhart succeeded to the throne of Gifford, and carried on the old tradition with energy and fearlessness. He conducted the 'Quarterly'

like the open-minded scholar that he was. That this marvel of gaiety and kindness should have been remembered by many chiefly as "the Scorpion, who delighteth to sting the faces of men," is in great measure his own fault. For though his talent was far better adapted to enthusiastic appreciation, it was too often his fortune to castigate the fool, and since in him contempt was but enthusiasm inverted, he sometimes castigated more brutally than was necessary. That, indeed, was his only error, an error which pales to insignificance in the light of his many virtues. He was bold, independent, and scrupulously just. As quick to recognise a new contributor as to praise a new talent, he did his best to free his Review from the weight of officialism, which Gifford had thrown upon it. And for nearly thirty years he was an arbiter of English literature, who never used his power to lower the standard of letters, or to discourage talent.

But in 1853 his health failed him. The constant responsibility of the 'Quarterly' was no light burden. He was, as he told his friends,

Over-worked, over-worried,
Over-Crokered, over-Murrayed,

and for this condition there was no cure but rest. Even rest failed to cure Lockhart's malady, and once he had left the Review, he never returned. But in nothing did he show the acumen of his mind so clearly as in the choice of his successor. Now Whitwell El-

win, who, after a brief spell as *locum tenens*, succeeded to Lockhart's editorial chair, would not have appeared to the most of men as a suitable editor for the 'Quarterly.' He was, in his own phrase, "a village parson," yet Lockhart and Murray both selected him for the difficult post. How abundantly their choice was justified is amply proved by Mr Warwick Elwin's 'Memoir' of his father. The truth is that Elwin, by profession a village parson, was by talent a man of letters, by temperament a man of affairs. It was his youthful ambition to be an advocate, but he took orders, and had it not been for Lockhart's discovery, he would probably never have done the work for which he was best fitted. However, no sooner did he take command of the 'Quarterly' than he showed himself an editor of rare force and determination. He rejected what did not please him without fear or favour, and he pruned with a sharper knife and with less pity than his predecessors. The difficulties of his post were by no means light, and the heaviest of all was Croker. That old man of the sea still sat upon the back of the Review, from which neither Lockhart nor Murray had dared to dislodge him. Sir Walter Scott had recognised him as a danger thirty years before, yet he still fulfilled his contract to supply sixty-four pages to each number. Of his ability there is no doubt. His political judgment, though marred by a violence of ex-

pression, was generally sound. But acrimony was so old a habit with him that he was unconscious of its employment, and his hatred of France, though justified by events, was bitterly unpopular in the years before the Crimea. Elwin's first duty, then, was to get rid of Croker, and he faced it boldly. Lockhart gave him what encouragement he could. "You will be able to deal with him far better than I should," said he. "He and I for years have, as editor and contributor, been in intimate relations. You, who have had no previous connection with him, can act with perfect independence." And Elwin acted with so brave an independence that within a year Croker had ceased to contribute to the 'Quarterly,' retiring without reproach or rancour. "In spite of the bitterness and injustice of his criticism," wrote the new editor, "he had fine and generous elements in his nature." Which, we suppose, is no more than the truth.

Elwin was a born editor; and he had not been long in office when the Crimean war demanded his sanest judgment, his most energetic advocacy. Sebastopol fired his patriotism. "The spirit of the country is up," he wrote. "Men enlist with the utmost avidity, and the bloodier the actions the more they are eager to share the danger and the glory." He would have sent his own son to fight had not the boy been too young for an ensigncy, for, said he, "I do not think that

any family is justified in exempting themselves from their portion of the burden." Such was the spirit in which he set about the editing of his *Review*. There were so few contributors upon whom he could rely that he determined to reserve for himself "the honour of paying a tribute to the personal heroism of the army." He undertook the task in all humility, and willingly resigned it when Layard returned from the East with the impressions of the battle-fields quick upon him. But Elwin did not silence the voice of patriotism, and wrote an indictment of the Government in no spirit of party, which Forster read "with admiration and agreement for its temper and moderation, even in severity." The indictment had an instant effect—all the greater because the authorship was kept a profound secret. "All the weight will be gone," said Elwin, "if it is known that it proceeded from a village parson." But the village parson did not hesitate to repeat the experiment. Henceforth he professed the keenest interest in politics: he made himself something of an authority on military matters, and he pleaded the cause of Lord Raglan before Kinglake with equal eloquence and conviction. Yet he had not the training nor the perception which make the successful politician, and his opinion was less sound in peace than in war. Though patriotism was always a trumpet-call to him, he did not understand the intrigue

which is inseparable from party politics. None knew more clearly than he that the Tories' first necessity was adequate leadership, but he was too old-fashioned to accept the only leadership that was possible. He shared the general distrust of Disraeli, and saw in his policy nothing but "a Radical game played by Tory hands." "Disraeli," said he, "has no settled policy. His tactics are to trust to the chapter of accidents, and to endeavour to turn to account any cry which may chance to arise." This was written in 1855, when even the most stiff-necked Tory might have understood the claims and policy of Disraeli. But yet more remarkable than this lack of foresight was Elwin's attempt to choose a leader for his party. At the outset he thought that Sir E. B. Lytton might prove a Conservative leader superior to partisan influences. And the novelist failing, he turned his eyes towards Mr Gladstone, whom he persuaded to contribute to the '*Review*,' and with whom he frankly discussed the situation. "Gladstone," wrote Elwin to Murray, "is extremely anxious to get out of his present neutral position. I wish I knew how to bring him and the Conservatives together. . . . I am convinced that, with the checks imposed by the necessity for conciliating his supporters, he would be a safe man. His vagaries are nine-tenths of them the result of isolation." But Elwin did more than express his opinion to Murray: he wrote, with all an editor's weight, to

Lord Derby, to suggest a reconciliation with Gladstone. Both statesmen were ready for the alliance, yet neither would make the first advance, and thus, in Elwin's despite, Gladstone was for ever lost to Conservatism. And what Conservative is there who will regret it?

So for seven years Elwin governed the 'Quarterly Review' with an impartial hand. But he did not merely edit it; he enriched its pages by a set of admirable essays in biography, now reprinted. In literary criticism he found his true craft. To taste and knowledge he added a shrewd judgment of character, which enabled him to understand the men of whom he wrote as well as their works. His paper on Boswell is, so far as we know, the only attempt ever made to do complete justice to that volatile Scot; while his estimate of Johnson, if less original, is no less sound. But Elwin, in adding the work of a contributor to the duty of an editor, undertook more than he could happily accomplish. As the unpunctuality of the 'Quarterly' increased, so the remonstrances of the publisher grew louder, until Elwin could endure the strain no longer, and with perfect content left the great world for his country parish. Yet he had lived long enough in London to have earned the friendship of Thackeray and Dickens, of Brougham and Lyndhurst,—of every one, in brief, whose friendship was worth the winning. It is an amiable career, which was well worth the

sketching, and no one who reads Mr Warwick Elwin's sympathetic biography will deny the propriety of the name—Dr Primrose—given by Thackeray to his friend. But if by the simplicity of his life and character he deserved to be called Dr Primrose, by his essays he merits a very different reputation; and these reprinted volumes persuade us to wonder whether the forgotten files of the 'Quarterly' do not conceal other treasures. Elwin was not the only reviewer who excelled in the art of literary biography; and maybe Mr Murray could give us a volume—in supplement to these—containing the best of Lockhart's essays.

Such was the 'Quarterly,' and such its editors, nor is it any disparagement to the excellent Review as it is conducted to-day that its influence has declined both in force and character. It is no part of its present purpose to change the leadership of a political party, or to make a revolution in literary taste. What, then, is the secret of the change, or, in other words, to what did the ancient 'Quarterly' owe its power? Partly, no doubt, to an older convention of life. Our fathers had not learned the art of "hustling." They had no ambition to change the universe in an hour, nor to kill serious literature with the speedy death of journalism. They were willing to discuss a book or a policy, not for the space of a journey underground, but for three months, and their method was better for them and for

their country. Yet a changed convention of life is not of itself sufficient to explain a changed convention of literature. The 'Quarterly' owed something of its force to an absence of rivalry. In the earlier part of the last century the daily press was scarcely recognised, and though the contempt in which the factories of hasty judgments were held was part and parcel of the prevailing fashion, this contempt is apt to be forgotten. When Disraeli visited Chiefswood to offer Lockhart the editorship of the 'Representative,' Lockhart objected to the loss of caste entailed by the editing of a newspaper, and all his friends were of the same mind. The management of a Review such as the 'Quarterly' was deemed the office of "a gentleman and a scholar"; a newspaper was a mere business-machine, so much "stock-in-trade, to be used as it can be turned to most profit." The modern editor, conscious of his irresponsible power, doubtless looks contemptuously upon this view of his duty, but Lockhart's attitude was perfectly dignified, and were he to return to these shores he would find it supported by the event. For the change is assuredly a change for the worse; sensation is a poor substitute for argument; and as we contemplate the large doses of excitement daily administered to the people, we cannot but regret the slower method and riper judgment of the past.

When the 'Quarterly' was at the height of its influence, the slated author was wont to

denounce the arrogance of the professional critic. Of late it is the unprofessional critic that has been visited by the hardest knocks. Sir Edward Clarke, not long since, expressed a harsh opinion of modern literature, and Mr Edmund Gosse retorted with the question, "By what right does Sir Edward Clarke, the member of one profession, bring railing accusations against the members of another profession?" This cry of hands off is familiar, and (we think) irrelevant. It is raised from time to time by angry poets or dramatists, who by their very protest prove that they take the "unprofessional" critic too seriously. Sir Edward Clarke himself has already heard it assail his reluctant ear. But the question has never been more concisely stated, and it is interesting to examine the pretensions of either side.

Mr Gosse, then, insists that nobody may hold an opinion concerning a matter of literature who does not belong to the literary profession—who, in other words, does not earn his bread by writing, or has not undergone a serious training. As far as we know, no training has ever been invented which shall convert a human being into a man of letters, and the mere accident of bread-winning may justly be neglected. A man of letters, indeed, may only be known by his fruits, and there is nothing in the nature of things to disqualify a lawyer or a clergyman from holding sane views upon literature, or from expressing them sanely. The

proof of the critic is in the criticism. Foolish views recoil upon their utterer, whether he be a bishop or a stockbroker; and until the expression of a vain opinion is punished by law, it is idle to protest against the interference of "unprofessional" critics. Moreover, there is a kind of cant in this immemorial cry of "Hands off!" No sooner is a book published than it invites the public censure. The newspapers are persuaded by free copies to print their opinion. The people is asked by advertisement to part with their shillings in exchange for the book. Mr Gosse, we suppose, does not condemn the newspapers for their criticism. Nor should he forget that the people by the act of purchase also constitutes itself a critic. The common man, whatever be his profession, backs his fancy when he buys a book. If he do not accept it on faith, he undergoes a mental process, which is nothing else than criticism. When he has read the book, he discusses it with his friends, if indeed he be articulate, and thus he becomes a critic not only to himself but to his circle. Does Mr Gosse believe that the common man, having purchased and read a book, is not entitled to his opinion? Or does the crime begin when that opinion is mouthed in public, or printed in the newspaper? In other words, is criticism, like libel, made vicious only by publication? Assuredly not, and no material process, such as gathering an audience in a public hall, or making use of movable type, affects the wisdom or

morality of the critic, who is already guilty when he has formed an erroneous opinion in the seclusion of his smoking-room.

It is a perfectly easy thing not to publish books. We have nothing but respect for the sensitive author who writes for his own pleasure, and who prints, if he print at all, for private circulation. Had Edward FitzGerald, for instance, been assailed by a criticism which he did not invite, he would have had every reason to protest. A dramatist who finds an ideal stage in his own back drawing-room is right to exclude every other critic than the critic of the hearth. But publication, as it may bring rewards, brings with it also penalties, and he who invites purchasers may not condemn those purchasers to silence. On the other hand, as we have said, the proof of the critic is in the criticism, and the easiest thing after publication is to neglect the criticism of the fool. The opinion of no man, be he professional or unprofessional, is worth more than its face-value; and though the writer cannot hinder its expression, he may neglect it if it be worthless.

Yet the comedy of life is always presenting to us the spectacle of the author, who first invites and then resents the judgment of others, who, protesting the while that critics are foolish when they are not malevolent, sedulously subscribes to a press-cutting agency. To him blame is always the intolerable expres-

sion of personal malignity, and the malignity is never so shamefully personal as when it is expressed by a colleague. The worst is that the critics of literature follow the same craft as their victims, who in turn criticise the critics, and it is this truth which makes us view the professional spirit with suspicion. In literature professionalism savours too much of the prize-ring and the spiritualistic *séance*. When Voltaire visited Congreve, Congreve declared that he would rather be regarded as a plain gentleman than as a dramatist. And though there be a touch of snobbery in this attitude, it is a snobbery which leans to the side of virtue. The professional author too often conspires with his fellows to make a coterie, and the coterie not uncommonly thinks that the world of letters is its own peculiar province. Its members translate the praise of themselves or the blame of others into the facile shibboleths of their trade, until professionalism becomes absurd. Here, indeed, is a far greater danger to letters than the chatter of amateurs; but this danger also passes with time, since that which is worthy to live lives, in despite of contemporary praise or blame.

Sir Edward Clarke, then, had a perfect right to say what he thought of modern literature, and, in our view, Mr Gosse's pompous reproof was wholly unmerited. Even if Sir Edward were far less instructed, far less intelligent than he is, he would not deserve the muzzle,

especially at the hands of one who was forced to yield in the battle of accuracy. But this eminent barrister has had bad luck in his encounters with men of letters. Once upon a time he expressed disapproval of a popular play, and he was curtly told that he and Lord Halsbury were the two among Englishmen disqualified from giving an opinion. And now Mr Gosse would gag him and his like to silence. Did so harsh a fate ever pursue a distinguished barrister? But though we willingly concede to Sir Edward or to any one else that claims it the right of criticism, we in return ask the privilege of criticising the critic, and we find his condemnation of modern literature wholly inapposite. It is always dangerous to prophesy, and since posterity is the final judge, he who declares dogmatically that his own age is barren of letters is rashly attempting to anticipate the future. Immortality is not in the gift of this or that critic, and history teaches us that contemporary opinion is most often reversed. The greatest men speak to an age unprepared to hear them, and most frequently find a sympathetic audience in a later generation than their own. Prognostics, therefore, of every kind seem to us superfluous, though surely Sir Edward Clarke is entitled to squander his ingenuity as well as another. There was once a critic, a hardened professional, who, in condemning a poet, declared that in forty years not one line of his works would be remem-

bered. The poet, with admirable humour, invited the critic to lunch with him forty years hence, when, said he, "we will discuss questions of literature." That, we imagine, is the wisest retort. The man of letters has finished his work when the last proof is corrected, and whether that work dies to-morrow or carries within it an appeal to generations yet unborn, depends upon some eternity of interest, some inherent beauty of style, which may escape contemporary prejudice. Prophecy, therefore, is idle, even if it be fascinating; and Sir Edward Clarke's speech seems to us no more valuable than an attempt to spot the winner of next year's Derby. But all the professional critics in the world will not persuade us that he had no right to make it.

Books have their fates, which are sometimes as inscrutable as the destinies of men. Immortality comes by accident as well as by merit. Sometimes an author proves his own worst enemy, and overshadows by a single masterpiece works which might have made the reputation of a lesser man. Cervantes, for instance, is so conspicuously known as the author of 'Don Quixote' that his 'Exemplary Novels' have suffered an undeserved eclipse. 'Don Quixote' long ago passed into the whole world's inheritance, and is as intimate a part of our life and literature as the plays of Shakespeare. We are born,

so to say, to a knowledge of this humane and magnanimous romance, whose very splendour sometimes makes us forget the 'Exemplary Novels.' Yet these masterpieces in little have been known to the masters of many generations. Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, and Middleton owed much to their ingenuity. Sir Walter Scott told Lockhart that they "had first inspired him with the ambition of excelling in literature," and he borrowed more than a hint for his *Alsatia* from the incomparable sketch of the *Triana* in 'Rinconete and Cortadillo.' For all that, the 'Exemplary Novels' have never won the general fame which should be theirs. In England especially they have been neglected. Though Mabbe translated half-a-dozen of them incomparably well, he refrained his hand from the best, and until this year we could not boast of an adequate translation. And now Mr Norman MacColl has removed the reproach, and has given us an English version of all the 'Exemplary Novels,'¹ accurately made after the best text, and loyally faithful to the original. Those who have no Spanish may now read "The Licentiate of Glass," "The Dogs' Colloquy," and the rest in Mr MacColl's workmanlike version. To praise these admirable stories seems an impertinence. We can only urge that they be read and read again. "The Licentiate of Glass" is a study

¹ The Exemplary Novels of Cervantes. Translated by Norman MacColl. With an Introduction by J. Fitzmaurice Kelly. Glasgow : Gowans & Gray.

of amiable perversity, unmatched outside 'Don Quixote,' while the texture of its wisdom is close inwoven with such proverbs as only a Spaniard can devise. And where shall we find a wiser criticism of life than in "The Dogs' Colloquy"?

But it is the peculiar quality of these stories to make Spain visible. Even to-day you cannot visit Salamanca without thinking of Don Antonio de Isunza and Don Juan de Gamboa, and of Don Antonio's famous adventure under the Colonnade. The Triana of Seville can never be without a grimy romance, since Rinconete encountered Master Monipodio within its purlieus. But on every page breathes the spirit of Spain, which, never young, suffers no change of time or circumstance. As Cervantes saw it, so you may see it to-day, and, with the 'Exemplary Novels' fresh in your memory, you may see it with the eyes of Cervantes. We have not space to applaud the ingenious variety of these stories, their melting pathos, their generous romance. We can but commend them to our readers, who will find them far better worth than a cargo of modern novels, and who in Mr Fitzmaurice Kelly's scholarly preface will find all that there is to know of their history and interpretation. When they were written the critics still dispute, but it is certain that they were published when Cervantes was already advanced in years. And thus in his riper age he drew his own

portrait, to satisfy "the desire of some who would be glad to know what face and figure he has who ventures to come out with such imaginings into the market-place of the world": "He whom you here behold"—in the imagined painting of a friend—"with aquiline visage, with chestnut hair, smooth and unruffled brow, with sparkling eyes, and a nose arched, although well proportioned; a silver beard, although not twenty years ago it was golden; large moustache, small mouth, teeth not important, for he has but six of them, and these in ill condition and worse placed because they do not correspond the one with the other; the body between two extremes, neither large nor small; the complexion bright, rather white than brown; somewhat heavy-shouldered, and not very nimble on his feet,—this, I say, is the portrait of the author of the 'Galatea' and of 'Don Quixote de la Mancha' . . . and other works which wander up and down, astray, and perchance without the name of the writer." So his 'Exemplary Novels' have wandered up and down, and now at last they have found a proper harbourage in the English tongue. Nor, as we have said, is the indifference of mankind so much to blame for the neglect as the genius of Cervantes, who by one masterpiece overshadowed his other works, and with the brilliance of 'Don Quixote' blinded the world to the lesser light which shines in the 'Exemplary Novels.'

PRIESTS AND PEOPLE IN IRELAND.

BY AMHAS.

A REMARKABLE feature in the Irish scenery of to-day is the towering spire of a cathedral-like church, surrounded by houses which are little better than the rural cottages. At Kilmallock, in County Limerick, such a spire is seen from a distance of many miles round, dominating the old fortified town of the O'Briens, which still retains part of its walls, and dwarfing the ruins of the ancient abbey hard by. At Queenstown a cathedral stands above the empty harbour. At Nenagh in Tipperary the old-fashioned Protestant St Mary is elbowed into a corner by the magnificent new St Mary of the Roman Catholics. Similar Romanist churches and cathedrals have sprung up at Letterkenny in Donegal, and at Armagh, in the north; or at Thurles and Cork in the south. The old barn-like chapels are gradually being replaced by these fanes, and the Protestant churches appear small and humble beside them; while in other towns we find large collegiate buildings, monasteries, and nunneries, all apparently erected regardless of cost. When we remember that a century and a half ago even the old chapels had as yet not been built, and mass was performed in the field or under the oak-tree, the change is remarkable; and to the new-comer it appears an evident

sign of the increased wealth and power of the Roman Church. That it is a sign of increased prosperity in Ireland cannot be doubted, for sums of £30,000 to £100,000 have been collected, or left by will, for the purpose of such church-building. But the general scene reminds us rather of some French city, where the small houses of a sleepy and decaying town crowd at the feet of a mediæval cathedral. Only two other buildings of great size, and of architectural pretensions, are to be noticed beside the new churches, and the ruins of older castles and abbeys. These buildings unfortunately are the lunatic asylum and the workhouse.

We are led, therefore, to ask whether this profuse display of wealth, and this demonstration of Catholic piety in stone, does really represent increasing power of the Church, and contented prosperity among its worshippers; or whether—like many other things in Ireland—the outward appearance conceals an inward reality of very different character; and on this question the census returns tell a very different story, while the opinion of Romanists themselves has been shown by more than one book recently published, of which the most remarkable perhaps is Mr M. J. F. McCarthy's '*Priests and People in Ire-*

land.’¹ For, although he is perhaps rather one-sided in his denunciation of the ecclesiastical policy of his own Church, the figures on which he relies are taken from official returns. It is not indeed the fault of the priests that Ireland has a damp and depressing climate, or that a great part of its western districts is barren and rocky, and far remote from the great centres of trade and progress; but, on the other hand, in matters of education, and in dealing with Protestant nations, it can hardly be denied that the sacerdotal policy is responsible for the present condition of the Roman Catholic population remaining in the country. On four distinct counts Mr McCarthy characterises this sacerdotal policy as inimical to the common weal of Ireland. The policy of the priests, he says, has four main objects:—

“1. Its own aggrandisement as a league, apart from the body politic in which it flourishes, but in alliance with an alien organisation whose interests are not the interests of us, the Roman Catholic laity of Ireland.

“2. Moulding the ductile minds of our youth, so that their thoughts in manhood may run, not in the direction of enlightenment and self-improvement, but in obedient channels converging to swell the tide of the priests’ prosperity.

“3. Perplexing and interfering with our adult population in every sphere of secular affairs, estranging them from, and embittering them against, the majority of their fellow-citizens in the United Kingdom, imbuing them with disloyalty to the commonwealth of which they

are members, the result being that our people are the least prosperous—indeed, the only unprosperous—community in the British Isles.

“4. Terrifying the enfeebled minds of the credulous, the invalid, and the aged, with the result that the savings of penurious thrift, the inheritance of parental industry, the competence of respectability are all alike captured in their turn from expectant next-of-kin and garnered into the sacerdotal treasury.”

During half a century the total population has fallen to about half what it was; and in the same time the number of priests, monks, and nuns has doubled—being now estimated at about 23,000, or one for every 190 souls. This increase is no doubt due to Catholic Emancipation, and to the general tolerance of the British Government in repealing the old laws, which aimed at stamping out the Roman creed in Ireland. But if the two movements continue, and the number of celibates increases, it would seem that the clergy are in danger of finding themselves without any flock, and without means of maintaining the costly structures, in which so much money has been sunk as an unproductive investment—from a worldly point of view. That the bishops themselves are not without apprehensions on the subject is shown in many ways, especially by their activity in endeavouring to discourage emigration, to keep the agricultural peasantry at home, and to separate them as far as possible from all ex-

¹ *Priests and People in Ireland.* By M. J. F. McCarthy. Dublin: Hodges, Figgis, & Co. 1902.

ternal influences. The recent census must give them cause for anxiety, for although emigration has decreased, the birth-rate has also decreased in Ireland, and especially in the Romanist and agricultural provinces, while the death-rate is high, and the general health of the nation less satisfactory; so that we seem to see a steady decay in exactly those elements of population on which the Roman Church most depends. If, in addition, the number of celibates increases, the natural rate of progress of the population may be sensibly affected; and the clergy may have cause to reflect how a certain Patrick from France, nephew of St Martin of Tours, to whom Ireland owed its conversion to the Church of Rome, was himself the son of a deacon and grandson of a priest; and how even later, when the Irish Church had fallen behind the changes of system which had been gradually growing up in Rome, Pope Innocent III. objected to Irish benefices descending in families as hereditary titles: for celibacy was not established in either England or Ireland until after the Norman conquest. Romanist historians, relating the history of the Reformation, tell us that before that event the two kingdoms were prosperous and contented, and that all the subsequent misery of Ireland, as well as the loss of half France and of North America to the British crown, has been solely due to the revolt against Rome. But they do not explain why at the present day, when all

restrictive religious laws have been abandoned, when Romanist education is almost entirely in the hands of the clergy, and when the wealth of the Church has become greater than ever, the Roman Catholics are found to be steadily decreasing in numbers in Ireland, and unable to compete with Protestants in any calling which demands a modern standard of education. If, in the old days, the poor were fed and tended by the monks, why, we may ask, is it that, with so great an increase in the number of ecclesiastics, there is now also so large an increase in the proportion of Roman Catholic paupers, while in Protestant England the proportion has steadily decreased? There is no law that prevents the exercise of charity by the monasteries and convents; yet the workhouse continues to receive more and more inmates; and the workhouse is not supported by the Church, but on the contrary serves to increase the income of the nuns who are paid officials in its service. However zealous may be the bishops and priests of the Roman Church in combating the rampant vice of cities like Dublin and Cork, in denouncing drink, and in watching the young, it remains a fact that they have had a free hand for nearly a century in such matters, and that the condition of their flocks is less satisfactory than it was in the days of repression and persecution. Even devout Romanists appear to be coming to the conclusion that there must be something wrong in the sacerdotal policy,

when the Protestant—though in a minority—is steadily increasing in prosperity, and the Roman Catholic steadily losing ground.

It is not for want of energy and determination on the part of the priests, for they claim to arrange matters which, in other countries, would be considered far beyond their province. The recent excitement as to the affairs of one of the great railway lines is an instance of this. It has been found that nearly all the superior posts in the company are held by Protestants; and this is denounced as due to bigotry, and a return has been demanded by a self-constituted committee of shareholders directed by priests, of the religious belief of all these railway officials. It is a curious question to ask. What would be thought in England, or in America, of such a demand? But the affairs of an important company are threatened with dislocation because they have chosen the best-educated and most energetic of their staff for leading positions, while those who are unfit for such positions are found, on inquiry, to have owed their education to the Romanist priesthood.

There can be little doubt that jealousy and distrust of the laity lie at the bottom of such ecclesiastical failure; and the lesson should not be lost on others who belong to a denomination in which similar claims to clerical control are being made. Among English Roman Catholics we witness the same conflict between the broader-minded laity and the rigidly

Ultramontane clergy. The best Catholic education in Ireland is provided by the Christian Brothers, who are devoted laymen, though their vows are not for life. Their schools cannot be recognised by Government, because they insist on the use of their own religious emblems. On the other hand, they are coldly regarded by the bishops, because they are not under direct clerical control. We know, however, from instances in other countries, that the teaching of even devout Romanist professors is so hampered, whenever modern science comes in conflict with the Church dogmas and the philosophy of the sixteenth century, as to make the free progress of Catholic universities practically impossible; and of this difficulty the Christian Brothers—in spite of their submissive tone to the priests—are evidently aware. Thus even the best chances of education for Roman Catholics are damaged by the fears and prejudices of the priesthood. Such experience certainly does not favour any scheme for endowing Romanist colleges in Ireland.

It is unnecessary, in the present connection, to follow Mr McCarthy into the question of the feuds by which the Church of Rome is weakened internally—feuds between clergy and laity, regulars and seculars, converts and old Romanist families, Dominicans and Jesuits. They are well known to all who are familiar with the literature of the Roman Church, but they are matters of domestic rather than of general interest.

Another indication is found

in the enthusiasm with which the so-called "Celtic revival" has been taken up by some of the bishops and leaders of the Roman Church in Ireland. The number of persons able to speak Irish has—according to the census—been decreasing very fast, and there are very few left now who do not know English. But on the other hand the number of those returned as "studying Irish" has greatly increased, in consequence of the movement set on foot by the Celtic Society. There is nothing which has cut off the peasantry of the far west from the civilisation of England and America more than the inability to speak anything but Irish; and not only have they become aware of this, but their parish priests have also seen the necessity of teaching English; and the efforts of those who would bring them back to old conditions are powerless to stem the tide. Men will not take the trouble to learn a second alphabet, and a language which is extremely complex and difficult, when no practical advantages are to be gained by the study. The offer of extravagant prizes and salaries cannot balance the advantages which are to be gained by employment in countries where Irish is an unknown tongue. The legends of the saints, the traditions of the bards, and the somewhat apocryphal chronicles of Erin, may be very interesting to literary men; but the Celtic languages are not kept alive by any works of surpassing human interest and genius;

and, for practical success in the world, it is far more necessary to know German or French, to say nothing of the greater interest of literature in those languages. But the movement is not abetted by the bishops on purely patriotic or literary grounds. It is part of the sacerdotal policy to keep the Catholic flock safe from contamination by the outer world; and were it possible to create, artificially, a linguistic barrier, and to train up a generation that was unable to understand what any one not a Roman Catholic said, no doubt such separation might be made complete. But it is beyond the power even of the Roman Church to effect such a retrograde movement.

Within the last ten years there has been a general advance in education in Ireland. The proportion of illiterates has fallen, and four-fifths of the population over five years of age can write and read. More money is spent on primary education per head, and of this the Romanists have their fair share. Superior education has advanced within the same period; so that, in spite of the decrease of population (which is confined to the agricultural class), there are now four pupils where there were three ten years ago. The Roman Catholics represent about three-fourths of the total population, and they receive about three-fifths of the Government grants. As regards money spent on reformatories and industrial schools, the amount controlled by priests and nuns appears, according to

Mr McCarthy, to be very high, amounting to £137,000 as against £16,000 for all other persuasions. In institutions not inspected there is, naturally, some cause for suspicion that the same evils which have caused scandals in France may not be entirely absent; and that the Church is enriched by the unpaid labour of penitents and others, who have no choice of life: but it must at least be admitted that the clergy of the Roman Church are very active in this respect, and that they have no cause to grumble at not being aided by Government. It is, however, a well-known fact that the standard of education generally is higher among Protestants, in Ireland, than it is among Romanists.

The census returns show that there has been an increase of a quarter of a million in population during the last ten years; though, in consequence of half a million having emigrated, the number of those now in the country is decreased by $5\frac{1}{4}$ per cent, or a quarter of a million, the total numbers being now 4,458,775 souls. The natural increase is thus not only small, but it is also decreasing. The marriage rate appears to be much the same, but the numbers in family have somewhat decreased, perhaps representing greater prudence, or a less early age for marriage, which would not be a bad sign were it not for the increased proportion of paupers in the country.

The population of Ireland has shown great fluctuations since the time that it was first calculated. In 1671 it was

supposed to be over a million, and in 1821 it had reached 6,800,000, being then more dense than that of any other country in Europe. It continued to rise during the age of agricultural prosperity, for forty years after the Union, till it touched a total of eight millions, before the terrible days of the great famine. This disaster, leading to the American emigration, changed the whole history of the country; and population has since been steadily drained away to the United States, where the first emigrants formed a second home, to which their poor relatives were able to look, as a new field for their energies where there were friends to help them. The sending of money to Ireland, by sons and daughters, is said to keep half the poor out of the workhouse; but it is evident that the young and vigorous go abroad—generally under the age of twenty—and that the weak are left; for which reason we find that the percentage of the diseased and sick has unfortunately increased, according to the latest returns.

When we study the details of the census further light is thrown on the question of the state of Ireland. More than half the population is returned as unproductive or unemployed, including the women and children of the agriculturist class. The professional, commercial, industrial, and domestic classes are together about a quarter of the nation; and in these classes there is little change, the slight decline in the professional and

domestic being balanced by an increase of the commercial and industrial. It is in the agricultural class that the real decline is found: for Ireland, like England, has suffered severely in its agriculture; but with this difference, that whereas in the larger island there are about five artisans to one agriculturist, in Ireland more than half the population depend solely on the tillage of the land and on the grazing. The results of agricultural depression are thus more serious, and evident, than they are in Great Britain.

The proportion of the loss of population, which thus appears to be confined to the peasantry, is not in accord with the religious proportion; for nearly nine-tenths of the loss is among Roman Catholics, though they represent only three-fourths of the nation. This is of course natural, because the peasantry are so largely Romanist. But all statistics agree in showing greater energy and prosperity among Protestants. The agriculturists alone, in occupation of holdings, show a decrease of three-quarters of a million souls, of whom half a million have left the country. The remaining quarter-million may, in some degree, have served to swell the city populations; but it is only in the north that cities have increased, while in the southern provinces they have generally decayed. The large proportion of those lost to agriculture—other than the emigrants—appear to have found no resource except the workhouse, swelling the total of the

unproductive class, which shows an increase of 1·57 per cent. Half a century ago the paupers numbered only five per cent of population, whereas they now amount to nearly double that proportion. In England, in the same time, the movement has been the reverse, the ratio falling from five per cent to half that proportion. Thus, a tenth of the nation being paupers, the total more than accounts for the agriculturists who have disappeared within the limits of Ireland itself.

During the ten years the decrease in the area of land under crops of various kinds is about a third of a million of acres, whereas the increase of grass lands amounts to a quarter-million acres. If we regard the average holding as being about 20 acres, these grass lands would (were they all capable of agricultural tillage) suffice to support all the quarter-million of agriculturists absolutely lost in the country; but we cannot assume that the cause and effect are in this relation, for the conversion of the fields may be due to the ruin of their former holders. There was no doubt a time when landlords were forcibly expelling their tenants, and laying down lands once tilled in grass; but within the last ten years it is improbable that this has been done to any great extent. Some regard this increase as due to the ambition of small farmers who are endeavouring to become large graziers. It remains, however, a fact that great areas of land exist in the west,

sometimes close to the bog-holdings of the peasants, which are capable of agricultural use, and which, if so used, would check the drain on the peasant population, which is so evident from the census—just as emigration has been checked in Germany by agrarian reforms. The question has become more pressing of late, because the demand for migratory labour in England has fallen off, and such labour is the mainstay of the poor peasantry, especially in the huge county of Mayo.

The census returns are also sad reading in the matter of public health, and in the increase of lunacy: nor can we console ourselves with the explanation that this increase is due to stricter supervision, for the proportion of such unfortunates at large is insignificant, and has not materially altered. While population has fallen off the number of lunatics has increased, and the cause is not well understood. Taken with the health returns, it seems to indicate a decay in the sturdiness of the peasant race. It is often attributed to drinking strong tea; but the intermarriages in the small circle of village life have probably more to do with the increasing evil, while misfortune and misery must often be the cause of insanity. It is not only the churches and the convents that are being enlarged: the asylums also are unfortunately demanding extension.

There has, on the other hand, been an increase in the scale of comfort represented by the abandonment of mud-cabins,

and by the increase of better houses, and of separate stables and outhouses, which is clearly traceable to Government action. There is an increase in the total of cattle and asses; and, in spite of the war, the decrease of the horses is not large. The number of pigs and goats—which represent the peasant stock—has not fallen in proportion to the decrease of population, and the number of poultry has considerably increased, under the efforts of the Government Boards. The comfort of those who are able to live on their holdings thus appears to be greater than it was. The small holdings have decreased in number, and those of medium size have increased, while the valuation remains almost stationary, as might be expected under existing laws and conditions. If we look back a century, to the lawless times when a peasantry sunk in the greatest depths of ignorance and superstition, engaged in faction fights, and in desperate resistance to Government, were yet enjoying an agricultural prosperity which they thought naturally would continue for ever, we see that, in consequence of the decay of home agriculture, they are unable without aid to struggle against fate, in spite of the great improvements in law, education, and facilities of communication, the cheapening of all necessities of life, and the greater care bestowed on their interests by the central administration. The main question in Ireland is thus most clearly that of the land.

The want of energy which is charged against the peasantry is only applicable in reality to those of the south. The Mayo tenants have made a brave fight for self-support; the Ulster people as a whole are hard-working; and only in remote parts of Donegal do we find a poor and hopeless class. In the south the laziness of the peasantry is more evident, and existence in a workhouse does not appear to be shameful in their eyes. The militiaman will emerge from it for his training, and spend his pay in a few days, and return to the house for the rest of the year. Able-bodied married men will remain, and allow their families to remain paupers, because they are too idle to work. But it must be admitted that, for the labourer and the landless man, work is not always easy to find.

Whatever may be the true causes, it must be acknowledged that the Irish peasantry are a timorous people. They are still intensely superstitious, and afraid of ghosts, fairies, and demons: for the ancient paganism has not been entirely out-rooted by the teaching of the Church. They are trained to be submissive and conciliatory in manner; and the principle of obedience to the priest must be considered to deprive them of much of that rugged independence of character which marks the peasantry of Scotland. They are accustomed to ask guidance, and are easily discouraged. The dues of the Church are a heavy weight on their incomes; and the influence of the clergy is exerted to keep

them away from the more energetic nations of Protestant belief. It is the Roman Catholic peasants who are suffering in Ireland; and their decay accounts almost entirely for the diminution of the population. The blame is cast by the Church on the Government; but even Romanists are becoming aware that the short-sighted policy of the Church of Rome has really more to do with the state of Ireland. It is the same in Europe generally, for we see in all countries that Protestantism is the creed of the prosperous and energetic races, and that those under the influence of Rome are more and more left behind in the struggle for existence.

The history of the towns tells the same tale. In thirty years Belfast has trebled its population, and its rateable wealth has increased fivefold; while in Cork the population has dwindled, and the valuation is only an eighth of that of the northern city. 'Derry in twenty years has increased in population by three to two, while Waterford has decreased. The most purely Romanist provinces are Munster and Connaught, where the average decrease of population is nine per cent, against three and a half per cent in Leinster, and two and a half in Ulster. It is true that the latter two provinces are nearer to England and Scotland; but the proportion of decrease generally in Ireland is Roman Catholic beyond the normal.

As regards Protestants it is remarkable that, though the

number of immigrants from Scotland has increased, the Presbyterian numbers are stationary. The Church of Ireland has lost over three per cent of its adherents in ten years; but this is nearly balanced by the increase of Methodists. The Roman Catholic percentage of decrease is more than double that of the Disestablished Church. The defection from the latter is in some measure due to fear of Ritualism among Protestants who are in contact with the Roman system; but it appears mainly to be caused by social considerations: for Protestant shopkeepers find a warm welcome among Non-conformists of their own class, and less consideration sometimes in the Church which is representative of the landed gentry.

The proportion of the birth-rate in different parts of the country agrees with these various indications. In Antrim it is about 28 per thousand. In the agricultural region of central Ireland it is under 19 per thousand. Thus, though there are still three Roman Catholics for one Protestant in the country, there is everywhere a tendency to decay on the part of the former, and to increase among the sturdier people of the north. Nor can this in

any way be explained as due to advantages presented by Government or law. It is solely due to greater energy of character.

Under these circumstances it is a sign of the times that educated Romanists are waking to a sense of the dangers which confront them. Even the members of Parliament, who have been returned by clerical influence, claim to have their own opinion as to the course they consider best in the interest of their constituents. Literature that exposes the weak points of clerical policy has sprung up; and the imaginative pictures of Catholic happiness and success are criticised, by those who have a wider knowledge of the world than the priest can gain in a seminary. The peasant who has discovered America knows more than his ancestor, who never went ten miles away from the village in which he was born. In spite of the external show of wealth, the power of the priesthood is being slowly undermined by external influences; and on the ruins of an ancient condition of society the new forces of freedom will slowly build up in Ireland, as elsewhere, a new order very different to that of which monks and nuns are dreaming.

THE ALIEN IMMIGRANT.

IN an article entitled "Foreign Undesirables" we drew attention early in 1901 to the social dangers produced by the unrestricted influx of indigent aliens into the great cities.¹ We pointed out that though the evil only bore directly upon certain limited localities—the East End of London and the corresponding quarters of towns like Manchester and Leeds—yet its indirect consequences penetrated afar. An annual addition of some thousands to a population already congested aggravates overcrowding and lowers the standard of public health. It intensifies the difficulty of rehousing; that question would seem indeed, we remarked, "to have been taken up at the wrong end." The Government are much to be congratulated, therefore, in our opinion, on having appointed a Royal Commission to investigate alien immigration, under the experienced presidency of Lord James of Hereford. They have secured impartiality by giving the Jews an unimpeachable representative in Lord Rothschild, while an active M.P. like Major Evans-Gordon looks after the native interests of the East End. The Commission have added accuracy of knowledge by holding several sittings at Stepney in the midst of things, and they even propose to visit some of the most insalubrious corners of the Ghetto. Interrupted though their inquisition has been by the recess, and the subsequent illness of their President, they have already collected a most significant body of evidence. It is true that Dr Herzl, the head of the Zionist movement, has ingeniously tried to spit the Commission on the horns of a dilemma. They cannot recommend restrictive legislation, he contends, because England would then break away from the principle of free asylum for the oppressed which had hitherto been its glory: if they make no recommendations, they will advertise this country as a desirable abiding-place for refugees. That worthy visionary fails to perceive, however, that an international formula, though stimulating in itself, must often give way before the necessity of national preservation. Short of actual preventives, besides, there is the deterrent of warning. The Commission may cause it to be known that England is not a land flowing with milk and honey; that life in an East End sweater's den is barely to be preferred, in fact, to life within the Russian Pale. Suggestions to that effect have been made in the course of the sittings, and, if carried out, they could not fail to check materially an

¹ Blackwood's Magazine, February 1901.

exodus inspired for the most part by illusions.

Without attempting to anticipate the Report, we may do good service to this important Commission by summarising facts brought before them which have hitherto lurked obscurely upon the back pages of the daily press. They have failed, as was to be expected, in gaining an exact idea of the extent of the yearly invasion. This is a country of unexamined passengers as well as of untaxed commerce, and Mr Llewelyn Smith, of the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade, can only assert that, during the past twelvemonth, as regarded the movement of passengers between the United Kingdom and Europe there was an excess inwards of 89,000 persons. Very many of them, no doubt, must have gone on to America after a stay of a few days or weeks. Mr Llewelyn Smith would presumably be disposed, however, to reconsider his estimate of the annual increment as given in Mr Charles Booth's 'Life and Labour of the People,' where he puts it so low as 4000. The local authorities have, at any rate, to deal with 135,377 foreigners in the area of the County of London. No less than 54,310 of them, as Mr Reginald Macleod, the Registrar-General, explains, are herded together in Stepney, giving a proportion of about 18·2 per cent to the whole population. Mr Shirley Murphy, Medical Officer of Health of the London County, goes into further and more disquieting detail. Of the four

sanitary areas comprised in the Borough of Stepney, Whitechapel has witnessed an increase of the alien element from 24·1 per cent to 31·08 per cent between 1891 and 1901; St George's-in-the-East gives figures during the same period rising from 16·2 to 28·8; in Limehouse they were 2·1 and 3·7; in Mile-end Old Town they were 5·3 as against 18·2. Yet in Southwark hard by, a densely packed working-class quarter, the relations for the ten years are merely as 0·7 to 0·8. Westminster contains 11,831 foreigners, and St Pancras 8456,—totals by no means surprising when the wide dispersion of the French, German, and Italian elements is remembered. Still alien immigration virtually resolves itself into an inflotion in the East End; and its meaning to the East End can be grasped from the simple calculation that, though the whole population has only increased by 13,000 since the census of 1891, the foreigners have been augmented during the same period by 22,000. The displacement of native-born must, in other words, have been prodigious, more especially as it has been increased by the devotion of land formerly occupied by dwelling-houses to commercial purposes. Yet the Polish Jew occupies and replenishes Whitechapel and St George's-in-the East.

The evidence before the Commission, if candidly studied, will remove some prejudices and dissipate some apprehensions concerning these irrepressible immigrants. Uncleanly though

they may be,—and certain of the foreign steamship companies appear to consider washing and ventilation as unattainable luxuries,—they are not accused by medical officers of health of bringing epidemics with them. Dr Tyrrell, of the Royal Ophthalmic Hospital, asserts, indeed, that cases of trachoma, a contagious disease of the eyes which is largely a disease of the Jewish race, are beginning to be localised in London, after the patients have been rejected by the United States. It would be unfair, however, to construct a plague-scene out of various unsavoury admissions, the general conclusion being that the owners of vessels are exercising more supervision over their passengers than was the case some nine or ten years ago. Once established in Whitechapel or St George's-in-the-East, the "Polak" also undeniably develops by degrees various civic virtues. He begins, after a bit, to comply according to his limited lights with what he regards as the unreasonable requirements of the sanitary authorities. Abstemious by choice as well as necessity, he avoids many of the British vices, while succumbing to the passion for gain in the form of gambling. Subdivisional Inspector Hyder asserts, with the police-court reports to confirm him, that he has never known a gaming-house that has not been kept by a foreigner, and that those nuisances increase with the increase of the alien element. Illicit stills — another secretive source of

profit—are worked entirely by foreigners, though many of them have become naturalised. As the student of gregarious humanity would expect, offences requiring cunning and combination remain peculiar to the Jews, from the forgery of bank-notes and stamps down to the sanding of sugar. Dr Thomas, Public Analyst for the Borough of Stepney, declares that 28 per cent of grocery samples taken from Hebrew shops were found to be adulterated, as against 13 per cent from their Christian rivals. The owners of the first even find it worth while to mix impure ingredients with pepper and mustard. They have lowered the price of milk to 3d. a quart, at which it cannot be sold unadulterated. If their coffee seems to be the genuine article, it is because they grind a fresh supply directly a suspected stranger enters the shop, and so avoid detection. Crude crime, on the other hand, stands mainly to the discredit of the British-born. The police maintain that the condition of Whitechapel in that respect has by no means improved during the last twenty years. But the latest figures quoted by Mr Mulvaney, Chief Superintendent of the Whitechapel Division, attribute the blame, beyond dispute, to the indigenous Hooligan. Thus, in 1892, there have been 62 charges of crimes of violence, 55 against British subjects and 7 against foreigners; there have been 54 charges of burglary and housebreaking, 50

against British subjects and 4 against foreigners; there have been 362 charges of disorderly conduct and drunkenness, 331 against British subjects and 31 against foreigners. So far as ostensible law-abidingness goes, the Russian, Polish, and Roumanian refugees have effected an advance on those they have displaced. Our national pre-eminence in rowdiness and "bashing" stands out the more deplorably when the not uncommon spectacle of German or Scandinavian merchant sailors discreetly "half-seas over" is taken by way of contrast.

If the argument of "England for the English" carries any weight at all, the intrusion of a compact alien element into the heart of London cannot be considered, at the same time, other than a calamity. Its eviction of the former inhabitants is best considered in connection with overcrowding. There remains another grievance nearly as formidable, that, from the shopkeepers down to the earners of precarious wages, it is driving out all native competition. The Jews will only deal with their own people, even though they get thereby a much inferior article. A witness, who as an insurance agent should know, declares that of 267 shops in the Commercial Road, 142 are occupied by aliens, evidently meaning persons with foreign names. This exclusiveness is, of course, enjoined by the Hebrew religion in the case of "Kosher" meat. But in walks of life requiring less capital the stress

of Hebrew tenacity makes itself still more severely felt. Mr Blake, ex-president of the Costermongers' Federation of Great Britain, complains that foreigners will not "play the game fair"; and he embraces in a sweeping malediction both Jews and Italians. They decline to recognise the sanctity of the "pitch," but will rise before dawn to oust an old occupant who has worked up a connection. They bring the local authorities down on the trade by obstinately sticking to prohibited spots, often feigning an ignorance of English. Mr Blake, we note, is absolutely borne out in this last accusation by Chief-Superintendent Mulvaney. Of the persons summoned for obstructing the roadway last year, 74 were British and 375 foreigners; for the early months of this year the record is 13 British and 16 foreigners. And throughout the East End there rises the same bitter cry—that the pauper alien has intensified tenfold the struggle for existence. Much of this testimony comes, no doubt, from those who have been beaten by economic or personal accident. Did not Carlyle lament in the 'Latter-Day Pamphlets' the piteous case of Mr Jopling of Reading, an imaginary upholsterer and paperhanger, who, having stocked his shop, found that the railways had taken away his customers? Such wreckage there must be as social conditions change. The Commission had before them an even sadder and equally irremediable failure, that of a

blind piano-tuner whose patrons had been scattered over London by the impact of the alien.

Still, with every reasonable allowance made for the inevitable, including the substitution of machinery for handicraft, the native wage-earners have established a just complaint that they are being elbowed out by races of a lower standard than themselves. Their resentment, creditably enough, has never assumed the shape of anti-Semitism as it exists on the Continent. The British Brothers' League, a recently formed working - class organisation, already 45,000 strong, disavows all hostility to Jews for being Jews: what it does fight against is the unchecked arrival of the destitute, of whom a large percentage are Jews. That feeling prevails to a remarkable degree among Hebrews who have been English for a generation or two. No less than the Christian small tradesmen, who have trooped before the Commission,—haberdashers, basket - makers, and milk - carriers,—British - born Hebrew artisans declare that they are being ruined by "greener" labour. The effects of low wages have been disastrous to prices in the boot-and-shoe and the tailoring trades. An English Jew, working in the second of these industries, says that new arrivals, earning from 18s. to 24s. a-week, will spend as little as 6d. a-day on food and luxuries—2d. on cigarettes, 1d. on a Dutch herring, the rest on coffee and bread. We suspect these totals,—the incomings as

being too high, the outgoings as too low. It would be quite safe to conclude, however, that the man is sincere in his desire to live as his Christian neighbours do, and that he girds against the cut-throat competition of his unskilled co-religionists which keeps him down. Despite the honourable prejudices of race and creed, an Alien Immigration Regulation Act would be accepted with a sneaking sense of gratitude by the Jewish East End.

The pauper alien, as the Commission are pretty safe to explain on his behalf, cannot be called a pauper in the sense that he comes on the rates. The total number of foreigners relieved by the Poor Law authorities averages at 2000 a-year for the whole of London, and only half of this small number are described as Russian or Polish. They have frequent recourse to medical assistance at the ratepayers' expense, and that on the most trumpery pretexts. But the admirably managed Jewish charities provide, on the whole, for the wants of the necessitous. How far those institutions act as a magnet to the Russian Pale and the Ghettoes of Poland must be an open question: all charity tends to create poverty as well as to cure it. At least they encourage self-help, and not unfrequently repatriate the worthless. The ratepayers' chief grievance consists, however, in the sums which are spent, often ineffectually, in attempting to enforce the sanitary and factory laws. Mr Belcher's revelations before the

Commission of the state of affairs in Stepney, where he is municipal councillor, can only be received with blank astonishment. In one case twenty-seven foreigners were discovered working in two small rooms, with mattresses all round, and their food was black bread and coffee. In a second twenty-one women toiled in a kitchen 16 feet by 12 feet and 7 feet high, beds being all round the room; their food black bread and coffee, and their pay 8d. or 9d. a-week. In a third, three beds were found in a cellar, with eleven people sleeping in them, yet the place was quite unventilated. Such kennels would annihilate English people, but Russian and Polish Jews contrive to exist and even to increase in them. Mr Shirley Murphy shows that the death-rate for Stepney has declined, in spite of overcrowding, from 25 per thousand between 1886 and 1890 to 23.82 per thousand between 1896 to 1900. Stepney, as a whole, returned an increased birth-rate at the last census, the largest rise being in Whitechapel and St George's-in-the-East; but in London generally it fell. Even a crammed street like Bell Lane had much less than the usual amount of infant mortality. The wiriness of the race renders it exempt from consumption, the usual companion of overcrowding; it safeguards itself with hereditary science against disease; through its abstemiousness it begets healthy children, and the mothers look after them at home instead of

packing off to factories. That, in brief, is the clue to the survival of the least fit, from the recruiting-sergeant's point of view, in an acute contest for existence. Even if immigration ceased altogether to-morrow, the denationalisation of the East End would continue until, as we might hope, with increase of comfort, came a decrease of improvident marriages.

Mr Shirley Murphy roundly contends that in Stepney 8300 Englishmen have been displaced by 22,000 foreigners within the last ten years. In other words, Jewish landlords gamble in house property, and then look to making their profits by breaking the law as to the number of tenants they may admit. They have certainly put up the rents as well,—thus tenements formerly let at 13s. or 14s. a-week are now fetching as much as 23s., 27s., and 30s. Some of this enhanced value must be due to clearances for railway purposes, and to the rise of large factories. Not the whole of it, however, since the census returns establish that between 1891 and 1901 the population of the western district of St George's did not dwindle, though the number of houses largely decreased; and that the proportion of natives to aliens in the former year—10,000 to 2000—was exactly reversed in the latter. Thus overcrowding on the spot has obviously been accompanied by an overflow into the neighbouring slums. Looked at in other ways, the phenomenon may be interpreted to mean that 107 streets are occupied by for-

eigners which had native tenants six years ago: in a single locality, Albert Square, where from thirty-eight to forty houses used to be inhabited by Englishmen, there is now left but a single English family. In this instance again the evicted have evidently been forced to seek shelter elsewhere. The decisiveness for the foreign influx becomes the more undeniable when we remember that, against the diminution of the number of houses in some parts of the East End, in others two-storeyed buildings have been replaced by lofty model dwellings which accommodate many more than have been displaced. Yet the human saturation spreads laterally—ascends and descends. The growing resort to underground rooms, both for living and working, is a most evil sign, for the habits of the primitive troglodyte cannot be reproduced in the heart of a city without serious peril to the whole community.

The Commission have been confronted by some difference of opinion as to the adequacy of the existing laws to mitigate overcrowding. The witnesses agree that the staff of sanitary inspectors is insufficient, nor could it be increased without adding to the burden of the rates. Thirty more officials, it is computed, are wanted in the Borough of Stepney. But while a few of them expressed contentment with the present machinery, the majority considered it unduly dilatory and costly. Without burrowing into the intricacies of the

Public Health Act, or excavating the bylaws under which the local authorities are empowered to supervise tenements let in lodgings, let us get to the heart of the matter by means of professional opinion. Mr John Foot, the chief Sanitary Inspector to the Borough Council of Bethnal Green, uncompromisingly condemns the regulations as not worth the paper on which they are written. The statutory notices, which have to expire before action can be taken, prevent the prompt abatement of a nuisance, however flagrant. There ought to be, he contends,—and we quite concur with him,—a penalty for every day on which overcrowding is found to exist. Mr Foot agrees with another important witness, Dr Thomas, whom we have already quoted on the subject of adulteration, that the exemption clause, freeing houses above a certain rental from inspection, ought to be abolished. The landlords avail themselves of it in many cases by establishing in collusion with the tenants two scales of payments—one genuine, and the other fictitious and designed only to defeat the inspector. The absence of responsibility, where responsibility should be, forms an even more insurmountable obstacle to thinning out the warren. A landlord has only to establish one of the tenants in the position of keeper, and he gets off scot-free. The local authorities can only proceed against the latter, and the magistrates inflict nominal fines upon the man of straw. In twelve cases last year the penalty only amounted

to 1s. and the costs to 27s. Five paid in full; five paid the fines only; two paid nothing, and were detained one day in custody. In these cases the burden of paying the costs fell upon the Borough Council. But let us give Dr Thomas's actual words, because they are far more forcible than paraphrase:—

"In one set of buildings mainly occupied by aliens the population was 553, of whom 349 were adults. The place was so filthy as to be quite unfit for human use. They were the worst in the whole district. In regard to that place the magistrate had only imposed a fine of 1s. and 2s. costs. The Borough Council's expenses in connection with each case came to £2, 10s. or £3, a most costly business. The penalties were no deterrents at all. The owner of the buildings referred to had had twenty-two summonses in the last fifteen months. The owner's defence was that it was due entirely to the occupants, and that if they were in Buckingham Palace they would do exactly the same thing."

Dr Thomas gave a touch of reality to his evidence, on being recalled, by reporting local progress, or want of progress, since he had appeared before the Commission. Ten prosecutions had been instituted against the keepers of houses in Waterloo Place, St George's-in-the-East:

"All the twenty-one houses were overcrowded; but in the remaining eleven the nuisance was abated when notice was given. Waterloo Place was a part of St George's-in-the-East, largely inhabited by aliens. Of the ten prosecutions, in a few cases both fines and costs were paid, in others the fines were paid but not the costs, and in two cases neither fines nor costs were recovered. Those proceedings were taken in March, and since then the houses have been again in-

spected, and it was found that the condition of affairs in eight of the twenty-one houses was almost as bad as before."

One remedy, and only one, can stop this appalling and ineffectual waste of public money. The landlord must be made liable for the condition of his tenements; he must be taught, in the hackneyed but sagacious phrase, that property has its duties as well as its privileges. In most cases he knows perfectly well that the law is being evaded. If he happens to be ignorant, his ignorance is culpable.

But even so, the Commission have disclosed a fatal defect in the present haphazard system of dealing with the congestion of the East End. It is merely a machinery for driving out, or, as one witness more appropriately described the process, "hunting round." Certain sanguine authorities appear to believe that by a rigid enforcement of the bylaws matters will settle themselves, that rotation within a limited space will somehow produce a vacuum. Clearly, however, one district can only be improved at the expense of another. The driving-out policy merely results in the outskirts becoming as overcrowded as the East End parishes in the neighbourhood of Aldgate. The Commission, therefore, can hardly escape the conclusion that dishousing is no remedy unless accompanied by rehousing. The requisite accommodation should be ascertained by a comprehensive inquiry, and building should then be undertaken on

a logical plan. Mr Harold Hodge, the chairman of the Bethnal Green Sanitary Aid Committee, denounces the existing mode of sporadic erection, under no general control and directed to no common end, as expensive and ineffectual. He is absolutely right, though his advocacy of a single scheme for the whole of London seems more than a trifle visionary. The poorest working people cannot be dissuaded from living near their work, even by the most elaborate establishment of electric trams and electric railways. The East End populations will always consist, so long as the docks and factories remain there, of the various degrees of indigence. The space on which it herds might be made, nevertheless, to carry a million or two more with ample room to breathe. Miles upon miles of streets covered with crazy two-storeyed houses could be rebuilt, not necessarily with sky-scraping and sundarkening "models," but with barracks of some altitude. Bethnal Green, as it is, according to Mr Foot's computation, contains quite 7000 or 8000 people too many. Bethnal Green, as it might be, would cope with that excess and the addition to its numbers entailed by the normal birth-rate. A scheme, in short, confined to the East End, and given pliability by means of temporary shelters, would in the course of ten years or so render overcrowding little more than a memory—provided always that the alien flood were strenuously dammed out.

The Commission have been appointed to report (1) on the character and extent of the evils which are attributed to the unrestricted immigration of aliens, especially in the metropolis; (2) the measures which have been adopted for the restriction and control of alien immigration in foreign countries and in British colonies. They only deal incidentally, that is, with the interlopers' positive defects in citizenship; their uselessness for military service or agriculture; their refusal, in the case of the Jews, to blend with their native neighbours, and their supine deficiency in the "society spirit"—a fault when it embraces the extreme vagaries of trade-unionism, but a virtue when it revolts against sweating. They can comment with some directness upon the grievances the strangers' presence inflicts, and upon the bitter resentment, aroused not so much against the taking of food out of British mouths as against the turning of British families out of their houses. The mischief of a congested population, which they largely produce while escaping its consequences to health, would amply justify the Commission, as we think, in advising Parliament to legislate against them. The idea that, having once arrived, they can be diffused in various parts of London, or even prohibited from coming to London altogether, must be dismissed as utterly impracticable. Gregarious from religious necessities, they are also tied to their occupations,—slop-tailoring and cheap boot-

making,—which could not be dislodged from their present quarters without ruinous municipal expenditure. Thoroughgoing prevention is, in any case, to be preferred to illusory cure. We are the only nation to persist, in compliance with a respectable but outworn tradition, in opening wide our gates alike to dangerous political criminals and to weaklings who are bound to become social burdens. The young communities of America and Australia, though in need of broad backs and strong arms, display a much larger prevision in this respect than ourselves, though the “condition of the people” question has been with us since the days of ‘Sybil.’ We need not imitate as yet the new Commonwealth Act and the United States’ measures for Chinese exclusion by legislating against race and colour: that danger is real for the younger branches of the Anglo-Saxon race, but it has hitherto passed the motherland by. Neither need we copy the democratic ideas of America by prohibiting the entrance of any one under contract of service, even if such a regulation, could it only be enforced, would mitigate the evils of Italian child-slavery, and, unless their British competitors are misinformed, the importation of Italian ice-cream vendors and costers bound to employers at starvation wages of 3s. a-week. But we should be fully justified in excluding that kind of undesirable defined

by the American Act as “an alien who is either an idiot, insane, a pauper, a person likely to become a public charge, or a person suffering from dangerous or infectious disease,” and in construing pauperism to mean inability to provide at the outset for self-support. The possession of a few pounds—£10 is the minimum suggested by the Rector of Stepney—and the knowledge of a marketable trade should surely be indispensable to the privileges of British citizenship. Mr Mead, the well-known stipendiary magistrate, has submitted to the Commission the draft of a bill even wider in its scope, since it covers “bad characters” of the Anarchist type. His restrictive agency, comprised of British consuls abroad, inspectors appointed by the Board of Trade or Commissioners of Customs, and the court—the police court presumably—seems simple enough. Sir Alfred Newton, the ex-Lord Mayor, is entirely of Mr Mead’s opinion that a policy of restriction would have no extraordinary difficulty about it. Let us hope that their strong representations will colour the Commissioners’ Report. A colonising Empire like our own cannot afford, of course, to stretch the principle of “England for the English” too far. But the inexorable law of racial rivalry enjoins that London shall be for Londoners, not for alien hordes debilitated by social and legislative persecution.

OUR IMPERIAL MILITIA.

IN many cases when men speak of the British army the remarks are confined to the regular forces, no reference being made to the Militia or Volunteers,—mere auxiliaries, to come up when called for. But late events have brought a change when army matters are in question. Men are now forced to admit that, as their country has pushed out beyond the sea-coasts of the British Islands to form herself into the British Empire, such action carries with it the necessity of a corresponding reorganisation of the army if their imperial possessions are to be upheld; and the question of the future of the Militia becomes immediately important, because upon the rôle which may be assigned to it in our national system must depend the adaptation of our present military organisation to imperial requirements.

We were in hopes, when Mr Brodrick brought forward his Militia and Yeomanry Bill last month in the House of Commons, that something in this direction would have been indicated, but were, with many others who recognise the importance of the matter, sadly disappointed to find the Militia treated as a purely subordinate factor in the defence of the Empire.

This article was already in type, so it is too late to enter into a detailed criticism of the Bill, which contained a resolution, passed last year, to which

it asked that legislative effect might be given, increasing the strength of the Militia by bringing in men who had already served in the army; also to dispense with a certain amount of training for the Militia Reserve, with power to transfer men from one regiment to another, thus interfering with the territorial constitution of the force, which is before everything essential if it is to retain its national character.

Nothing was proposed which would render the Militia sufficiently popular to raise its strength to the establishment of 123,000, represented in October last by 104,000 men, or, that done, to improve the tone of the men enlisting in the force, so as to bring it in line with the regular army, capable of taking its place in national defence.

It is felt that if we recognise the Militia as a fighting force, consecrated to the support of the Empire by constitutional and time-honoured service, we shall be able to place the force in the second line of our imperial defence,—a defence not merely to be passive at home but, if occasion demands, ready to assume the offensive across the seas. The advantages to be derived from making the Militia a portion of the active army, ready to take part with the regular service as troops in the second line, fully instructed, are great, inasmuch as this division

of duties places the Volunteer force in the third line, clearly defining its position and responsibilities—the defence of the British Isles; while, when required in an offensive war, it would be employed as a further reserve to the active army as a third line. But to become an efficient support to the regular army the militiaman, before all things, must be made a soldier. Further training than that he at present receives is needed, for it is criminal to place him, untrained, in line with our regular troops in war. The annual bounty paid to him by Government is a retaining fee, binding him to come up for service when called upon: this constitutes him a servant of the State, and therefore a soldier. Should he fail to meet his engagement, he is regarded as a deserter, and is liable for trial accordingly.

To make him a capable soldier the nation must make a change. The old order of things under which the Militia remains must be amended, and an Act must be passed on lines different from, and much more far-reaching than, those proposed by Mr Brodrick. The organisation under which the militiaman at present serves fitted into the last or previous centuries. Since then, however, the conditions of labour and employment have changed to such an extent as to render the remodelling of the Militia a necessity, somewhat on the following basis, as suggested in the 'Journal of the United Service Institution' by General E. F. Chapman, C.B., lately

commanding the troops in Scotland, an officer whose long and varied service and experience entitles him to speak with authority in the matter:—

"Firstly, To arrange for the Militia service being constituted a thoroughly efficient force of infantry and artillery, by its being recognised as the true reserve of the army.

"Secondly, To improve the social status of militiamen and their families throughout the country, by demanding for the militiaman all the privileges and advantages given to a soldier in the regular service.

"Thirdly, By raising the Militia service to the dignity and importance of an imperial service, recognising its value as a factor in any scheme that may be formulated for the defence of the Empire.

"Fourthly, By removing the administration of the Militia from that of the Volunteer force, and classing it no longer as belonging to the "auxiliary forces," all questions relating to Militia organisation, &c., being dealt with as army questions, and the Militia being acknowledged as a part of the army."

To make the Militia a thoroughly efficient force, we must make the terms we offer sufficiently attractive to induce men to join, and after they have done so, to make them content to remain. To do this we must consider the tastes and habits of the class we appeal to—the English working man. Now, there is nothing more palatable to him than to

live and to work where he is known, where he is thought something of: to be nobody in his neighbours' eyes is to become nobody in his own. The manner in which the feeling has been recognised by the country can be traced throughout the history of the Militia, where we read how persistent England has been to retain a spirit which animates all social communities in the land, by localising the general levy out of which the Militia is evolved to its own county, making a lord lieutenant, the sheriffs, and the mayors of hundreds and parishes responsible that the quota was kept up, as was done until 1852 by ballot, after which it became a force of men voluntarily enlisted, with the ballot in reserve.

The plan by which the regular army was territorialised followed Mr Cardwell's reforms in 1872: it has been tried in peace, and has stood the strain of war; it is sufficiently satisfactory, and admits of modification from time to time; but the Militia was not remodelled to adapt it to what was then found to be necessary for the regular army.

The Militia Act of 1882, under which the force has been administered, enacts that every militiaman enlisted shall be enlisted as a militiaman for some county, and shall be appointed to serve in a corps for that county; but when the man has enlisted on these terms, he finds that his county has disappeared. The lord lieutenant certainly is left, with jurisdiction, power, duties, and privileges in relation to raising the Militia by ballot

and the proceedings incidental thereto, as well as the appointment of officers to the lowest rank, while the quota of militiamen appointed to serve for the county is transmitted to him. Everything else has been absorbed by the Adjutant-General, —discipline, military education, training, if the Militia comes under the Army Act by embodiment or when assembled for the monthly training. He also enlists and discharges militiamen, besides putting forward proposals for the establishment of the force: all of which means to the working man that when he joins he will get his orders from London, a master that he has never seen but who takes all he can get, to leave very little for the county where his own home is. He enlisted in the Militia upon the understanding, which he read in print on the walls of his county town, that he would be appointed to serve in a corps for the same, his own, county; and he would much prefer to be ordered about by some one nearer home, some one he could see sometimes, could speak to if he were lucky,—not an unseen official behind an office desk in London. If he wants anything he can ask his colonel for it, who will listen courteously, but will shake his head and tell him he must ask the adjutant to write about it to the War Office. Everything to him is in the clouds or beyond him; centralisation is what the working man, whether militiaman or civilian, cannot grasp: he prefers something substantial which he can see, some one who

can tell him what to do and how to do it like a man.

When a number of men are collected together to form a regiment it is personality that sways the man: human nature craves for something better, wiser than itself, something personal, that it can look up to when the time comes. It is personality which has made the British army what it is.

There is a feeling of *camaraderie* among working men which teaches them to follow the first: when they become soldiers it is all the stronger. With them to be a "towny," as they call a man hailing from the same county or village as themselves, is to be a friend, a man they will make for and follow. To be an officer of the same county as the man belongs to is to inherit a good deal of influence over him. The territorial system introduced by Mr Cardwell has proved it: men who enlist now, as often as not draw others after them. "It is the county regiment," they say; "anyhow it won't be all strangers. There's not such a drill as Sergeant Blank anywhere, and the colonel speaks to them like a gentleman." Such talk goes a long way with the men we want; they talk it over with their parents when they get home, and go to bed determined that they won't be shoved about any more by a "civil chap who is no better than ourselves. They don't do that in the South Kent; the officers are gentlemen there; I know them all." So next day he sets off to the depot and enlists.

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A man is part of his county, and he is proud of it; to be a Devonshire or a Somerset lad is what he likes to talk about; the good points of this or that county to which he belongs gain no belittlement from his lips. So when he goes to a fair or a market in the next county the praises of his own will be talked about, and its Militia will not be forgotten. If we raise the status of the militiaman to an equality with the regular soldier, the feeling will certainly be stronger when the man discovers that the equality is not one of words only but is accompanied by privileges equal to those given to the latter; a feeling of pride in themselves will arise if they believe that it is their own doing as citizens of the county which has made the regiment as strong as it is when they enlisted in it, while by their own personal, steady work they have made it so efficient; to all of which will be added the conviction that the stronger and the better trained it is, the more valuable it will become in the defence of their own homes.

If we are, in the way we have indicated, to localise the Militia to the county from which it takes its name, it will be necessary for Parliament to allow the Secretary of State for War to delegate some of the powers now vested in him to the lord lieutenant, so as to ensure that the civil administration of the county shall take a practical interest in its own Militia.

It would be necessary, perhaps, to modify the Act passed

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in 1871, by which the power of the lord lieutenant over the auxiliary forces was vested in and placed under the command of the Crown. The Commander-in-Chief would be in supreme command of the whole force, and all military details connected with the War Office should pass through his hands: he is a more living part of our military system than is the Adjutant-General to the mind of the working man, who can say with some emphasis after he has enlisted that he is under the orders of so great a man. The lord lieutenant would become the civil head,—the power now given to him by the Act to appoint officers to first commissions being retained, with an intimation that he is expected to exercise it in all cases,—to be assisted by the generals commanding the army corps, and the district. He would be helped in all non-military matters connected with the force by a committee of men resident in the county, of which the officer commanding the regimental district would, *ex officio*, be a member. The military command would be under the general officers above-mentioned, who would be held, with the civil authorities of the county, responsible that the required number of men is maintained. Recruiting to be under the civil, training under the military, authorities. By thus dividing the duties, we hope to induce the former to take sufficient interest in the Militia of their county to make the care of militiamen and their families residing in it a matter

of importance to themselves. It is of no use talking to working men of the Empire in which they live and which it is their duty to defend: men who have a settled income to live upon can do so, knowing that however much they talk to-day, to-morrow's dinner will come just the same; but the working man has one ever-present thought before him, how to live. If he does not get work to-day there will be no dinner for him, his wife, or his children to-morrow; so that before everything else he must be made to feel that if he joins the Militia there is some one near at home who will care for him and his family when there is need of it.

The question of uniform comes in here, as a man who seeks employment on the plea that he is a county militiaman must appear as one. Men look upon the right to wear it as a distinguishing mark, which places them on a somewhat higher social level than civilians who wear plain clothes. A militiaman ought to be considered a soldier at all times,—not only during the one month of the year that he is under military training, but also during the eleven months, or non-training period, when hitherto he has been regarded as a civilian, and neither county nor military authorities have been concerned with his welfare. Militiamen who put it on during the training only feel at a loss when they return to their friends with nothing to distinguish them from those who have remained at home. The matter

is just now the more noticeable, when towns and villages are swarming with soldiers and volunteers in uniform who have returned from the front, while the militiaman who has had to stay at home remains a civilian. It is a privilege of the regular soldier to wear his uniform at all times—in fact, he is ordered to do so, and the same order should to some extent apply to the militiaman. His uniform and accoutrements should be kept in store, locally, with his arms; an understanding being arrived at that the former are to be issued to him to wear in church, when exercising, or on public occasions, so as to be *coram populo*, as a king's soldier, like the Volunteers,—a distinguishing badge to show his regiment, at least, to be worn at all times by every man, instead of returning into store everything he has worn when being exercised as a soldier. Our object is to draw the Militia still closer to the regular army, and to do so we must, first of all, dress the men of the former service as we do those of the latter, not in a half-hearted way which makes them look like soldiers only when they are being drilled. The tone of the militiaman would be improved, and he will certainly have more incentive to behave himself. He will learn to put on his uniform as a soldier is taught to do, to smarten himself up when he wears it, and to believe that he is something better than a civilian dressed up as a soldier, "by order," as he is at present.

But it is in the matter of

training the militiaman, of turning him into an efficient soldier capable of giving trained assistance to the first line, the regular army, without withdrawing him from his civil employment, that the difficulty arises. Training of a month's duration in every year is perhaps sufficient after, as a recruit, he has passed two months' preliminary drill; but it is frequently the cause of loss of employment to him,—certainly it leaves employers unwilling to engage a militiaman. That the Militia should be regularly trained, annually, has been thought necessary from a very early date in England: as far back as the reign of Charles II. an Act was passed which legalised a year's training, and in 1757 another which enacted that the force be annually trained and exercised for a limited time on nearly the same basis as it is organised to-day. At that time England was almost entirely an agricultural country, and the working classes mostly field labourers, who, after the hay or wheat harvests were completed, looked for a holiday which they could take, with the consent of the farmer, without losing the chance of re-engagement when he wanted them. All this is changed now, and a multiplicity of employments have been started, which make it impossible for the majority of the men in any Militia battalion to take their holiday at the same time. Every district has its own peculiarities of employment: in the south and south-west the mining and manu-

facturing population can get away for a month in the summer, while the men in the purely agricultural counties who do so would lose all chance of work in summer or autumn, though they could serve with pleasure in winter, when permanent employment is at a standstill. In the mining country the force is popular, because a month's holiday, as it is deemed, can be taken at any time without interfering with the miners' prospects, and every man is virtually his own master; while in the manufacturing centres a mill-hand who asked for a month's holiday at any time of the year would be laughed at,—he has his Saturday afternoons, and he won't get any more.

Commanding officers of Militia reckon that 75 per cent of those willing to enlist under them join the Volunteers instead on account of this. A man will not enlist for a month's pay if it interferes with his regular employment, or if he fancies that an employer will not engage him because he is in the Militia. We want to make the militia-man a soldier; but he will not consent to be made if the making leaves him and his family with nothing to live upon. We try to do it without taking into account the habits or inclinations of working men as individuals, or the circumstances which surround each private in his civilian capacity. Those who do enlist are either fairly respectable men, with families, who hope to make a little money out of it before the

harvest-time, which is their main source of supply; or "ne'er-do-weels," who cannot get employment anywhere, being unskilled and lazy, though cunning enough, in many cases, to do two or three trainings a-year under different names. Men who remain with the Militia and rise to be non-commissioned officers become fairly useful soldiers though generally very old and grumbling, while those who remain as privates are poor examples to the young recruits. The annual training does not make men better soldiers than they were before. They are put under canvas, and become, of necessity, very dirty in person and in clothes; the weather constantly interferes with the drill and instruction, and it is generally considered necessary to treat them as soldiers of indifferent character who require a good deal of hustling. They are civilians, and generally family men, who resent the discomforts they are forced to undergo, and are nearly always backed up in their fault-finding by their wives, an overwhelming force in the stratum of society from which we draw our militiamen. The system is one that neither turns a civilian into a good soldier nor allows him to remain a civilian, able to earn his own living.

The difficulty would disappear if the Militia recruit, when he joined, was put through the full six months' preliminary drill which the Act prescribed, and was afterwards encouraged to keep up what he has learned by frequent, short

periods of exercise, which would not interfere with his civil employment. Fortunately, the Volunteers have shown us how such a training as is necessary may be given in local drill-halls and on local rifle-ranges, mainly as an "after-dark" system, where the teaching can be arranged without interfering with the regular civilian avocation of the militiaman. In plain clothes or in uniform, by companies or half-companies, and under local conditions, he may be trained without being withdrawn from his ordinary occupation. The recruit should attend for preliminary training at the headquarters of the regimental district, and it should be the complete training of a soldier: ample exercise to be given in the gymnasium to develop his physical powers; at least three out of the six months to be spent on the rifle-range, so as to give him a thorough command over his rifle; and so much drill as will teach him how to march from one place to another in "column of fours," to move in extended order across country, and to learn the meaning of "cover," and how to take advantage of it while doing so. Young men from seventeen to nineteen years of age would hardly feel the withdrawal for six months from civil life, but would enjoy it before settling down to a trade; and the men from nineteen upwards would be more valuable to employers than they were before they learned what discipline teaches. In Germany it is found that during the short period of compulsory

military service the average level of alertness and intelligence is permanently raised; and employers in England have found that militiamen who have come back from the late war are transformed beyond recognition, in the pink of physical condition,—better citizens, so more valuable workers, than they were in the old days. As was remarked by a daily paper, "We have yet to learn that equality of discipline is no less indispensable than equality of intelligence; that drill is as essential to the formation of efficient habits as is education to the development of ideas."

As regards the pay that should be offered, full army pay and allowances ought to be given when men are employed on military work, an allowance of a shilling for Saturday afternoon spent on the range, with "good shooting" and "good conduct pay" at the same rates as in the army to men who shoot well or exert themselves to promote the efficiency of the battalion by regularly attending drills throughout the year. Or if these inducements do not prove sufficient, a retaining fee of, say, £3 a-year might be given to men who attend the required number of drills, thus giving a man 5s. a-month towards his house-rent,—a welcome addition to his wages, but less than what Government pays for the month's training, the cost of which for a battalion of 400 men in pay and rations, but excluding hire of the land and the carriage of men and tents to and from the

camp, is considerably more. It would be necessary to construct barracks near headquarters, and rifle-ranges within reasonable distance; while the storerooms used for arms and clothing would, in many cases, be available as drill-sheds in winter.

If we are to organise the Militia as a second line, a homogeneous part of the active army, we must give militiamen some tangible proof of what we mean,—that when they enlist they become British soldiers, it matters not whether they remain with the Militia or with the regular troops, and that at any time the soldier who has chosen the former can change his mind and join the latter, as he can do at present, but only if he comes up for enlistment as a civilian enlisting for the first time, and tells the enlisting officer that he is a militiaman. The fact that as a militiaman he is on the same footing as a regular soldier would be impressed upon him if he could go before the officer commanding the regimental district and express his wish to join the line battalion; when, medical conditions and those of age, stature, and character being satisfied, it would be granted. When he became a militiaman he had taken the oath of allegiance, and had learned while under training what it was to be subject to military law: he would thus be ready to render as much obedience to the King's Regulations for the Army as he had been to those for the Militia. To understand that he could join the regular

army at any time would disabuse him of the belief that it was only on national emergency that he would be called out for active service as an auxiliary soldier: the individuality of the man would be developed, and his battalion would gain efficiency. After a time the feeling would become more assured, and it should be possible to embody the Militia when national emergency had not occurred, as in the case of when both battalions of the territorial regiment are abroad at the same time, when the third, or Militia battalion, could be embodied to serve on the home establishment,—all the battalions of the regiment being equally regarded as belonging to the actual army, though in peace-time the Militia would only serve at home.

Officers of Militia should as far as possible be treated as on the same footing with those of the regular army, and non-commissioned officers of Militia should be graded with non-commissioned officers of the regular service. Officers and non-commissioned officers of Militia might be eligible for courses at our military schools with those of the regular army, and officers of Militia might be allowed to enter the Staff College, and even to hold staff appointments either at home or abroad.

A free exchange in all ranks might be allowed between battalions of the same territorial regiment, qualifications being equal,—officers, non-commissioned officers, and men being passed from the Militia to the

regular battalions, and *vice versa*, for the good of the service and the convenience of individuals.

A Reserve for the Militia should be formed, not, as at present, consisting of men enlisted from the Militia, but of those who can find it possible to go through two months' preliminary training and then elect for the Reserve—their only duty to go through, every year, the regular course of musketry under the same conditions as those required for the battalion. Thus the expansion of our active army could be arranged to take place at any time, and the numbers required to increase our fighting power may be provided without withdrawing too large a proportion of our population from their civilian occupations.

In the Militia Act just passed men who have completed their line and reserve service, and who have also served ten years in the Militia, after their completion of service in the line or reserve—with those who wish to complete twenty-one years' service, and join a garrison regiment for two years—are allowed 4d. a-day if they join the Militia Reserve, with the liability to be called out in case of national emergency. This, though a step in the right direction, will give us a reserve of old soldiers, and will not, as it is wished, ensure a sufficient proportion of our working men learning so much of the rudiments of military training as to render it possible, when emergency occurs, to make efficient soldiers of

them after a few weeks' drill.

It is on the reorganisation of the Militia and the adaptation of our Militia system to imperial requirements that the union of our colonial forces with those of Great Britain in any plan of imperial defence depends. The feeling that binds our colonies to the mother country was marked, unmistakably, after General Gordon lost his life in the defence of Khartoum, when Sydney asked to be allowed to send a contingent to Suakin to join the English troops against the Mahdi—an action much applauded by the colonists of New South Wales in a demonstration in favour of national identity; and later on during the war in South Africa, when upwards of 30,000 colonial and Canadian soldiers fought side by side with our own.

No single one of our colonies has reason to maintain or can support a standing army, as Great Britain, from its position in Europe and owing to the possession of India, is obliged to do; yet each of them possesses a power in fighting men, exclusive of Volunteers, for local defence, who are ready and willing to undergo military training suitable to the requirements of modern warfare in a colonial Militia capable of fighting in line with our national army for imperial defence. If our Militia at home is made efficient, and the tone and character of the militiaman raised, the colonial Militia will accept the suggestion; and if colonial officers came to be em-

ployed on the headquarters staff of the army, and are invited to share in the training of the Militia, that force, together with those of our colonies, will gradually and eventually grow into an imperial force.

Everything points to the advantage of a mutual arrangement by which all our colonies can be induced to organise their forces, so as to ensure uniformity of arms, ammunition, equipment, and training. But, as the Colonial Premiers lately said in conference with the Colonial Secretary, "You are likely to obtain the best results by leaving us free to do as we please." And the Prime Minister of the Australian Commonwealth, speaking lately at Melbourne, is reported to have said, "It would be a great mistake to deny to Australia full participation in the duty of maintaining the Empire;" but at the same time he favoured decentralisation as contrasted with the centralisation sought by the English War Office, which in no way appealed to the patriotic sentiment and self-reliant spirit of Australians. If we require their aid we shall gain it from a militia of Volunteers who, while organised to take part in purely local defence,

have been trained in the identical methods which are employed in England. If an arrangement of such a character can be arrived at, the home Militia when called out for active service should be offered the right to volunteer, by battalions, in association with those provided by the colonists, so that British and colonial battalions may be brought together to form an imperial force under the control of a systematic and economical reorganisation of forces ready to take conjoint action in imperial defence.

It is to be hoped that the changes in the organisation of the force which we have indicated will make the Militia popular with, and raise the tone and military value of the men we look to for, its soldiers; that with their assistance England's national and constitutional force will again become an efficient fighting body of men, ready to place themselves, on equal terms, with their comrades of the regular army, not only at home as a second line of defence, but across the seas, to form, with their Colonial brothers, a force powerful enough to be recognised in all parts of the Empire as a truly imperial service.

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NATIONAL STRATEGY.

BY A STAFF OFFICER.

THE ridiculous mystery which enshrouds the proceedings of our councils of defence has long been an anachronism, and is fast becoming a danger. Now and then the veil is lifted, and the fleeting glance which the public obtains of the personalities within the holy of holies is far from being of a nature to inspire reverential awe for established authority.

During the past few years many things have occurred to cause uneasiness and nourish doubt regarding the procedure of the secret councils which sway the destinies of Army and Navy, and, through them, of the country and the Empire.

No one who has closely followed the themes of our naval manœuvres of late years can have failed to notice that rarely, if ever, has the practice of fleets conformed with the

expectations of the Admiralty. Whether it has been blockade, attack, defence, protection of commerce, or more ambitious operations, the reality has generally proved to be something very different from the general thesis which has inspired the plan of the manœuvres. The Navy itself has come through the ordeal very handsomely: the strategy of Whitehall has not been equally triumphant.

But all this leaves no bitter taste behind. We feel assured that our naval strength is solidly established, and that fearless inquiry and experiment are courted by the Naval Lords, with a genuine desire to rather learn than preach.

No one can quite say what will happen in the next naval war: a few great principles, the grand lines of strategy,

have come down to us from an honourable past; but the future application of these principles, continually varying as it must with varying means, cannot yet be set up in the shape of infallible dogma. The genuine distrust of our military administration, on the other hand, a feeling common to all parties and devoid of all party bias, is founded on a sincere and well-grounded belief that there is something radically rotten and unsound in the system of Pall Mall.

We can all recall the very disheartening debate, or rather political duel, in which the late Commander-in-Chief and Lord Lansdowne figured, to the infinite regret of their friends and the edification of our enemies. Nearer again to us are the ample proofs that both War Office and Cabinet totally misunderstood and underestimated the situation in South Africa and the nature of the struggle to which the nation stood committed. Lastly, we have the papers on the late Colonial Conference, which disclose in the crudest fashion the entire misconception by the War Office of the elementary principles, the opinions, and ideals which lie at the root of colonial self-government. But this is not all. In these papers there will be found two documents of the highest importance, not so much in themselves as in the powerful light they throw upon the complete divergence of views which exists between our naval and military counsellors. The first of these

papers is the Admiralty Memorandum on Sea Power, a brief, lucid, and unimpeachable statement of principle, which clearly and vigorously affirms that the traditional rôle of the British Navy is the offensive, and rejects with scorn and contumely the very word "defence." Opposed to this we have the War Office theory, 640,000 men in arms, of whom all but 120,000 are confessedly and deliberately organised for passive defence—that is to say, for a kind of warfare which our naval strategists refuse to contemplate for a moment.

It is abundantly clear that one or other must be wrong, and, if wrong, then much of the expense which these armaments entail upon the public must be avoidable.

For the average reader who may have ceased to take absorbing interest in military reform after the passing of his hot fit, it is well to particularise. The War Office ideal of strategy gives us, in addition to recruits and non-effectives, 190,000 men for home garrisons; 200,000 men, more or less, for the defence of London, and a home field army of 120,000 men; with 80,000 white troops for India and 30,000 for the colonial garrisons. We must therefore carry forward a total of half a million men at least, committed, by the nature of their functions and the law of their recruiting, to a task which is nothing more or less than a sinecure unless our Navy is driven from the seas. "These numbers," said Mr

Brodrick to the Colonial Premiers, "are certainly not deemed too large by our military advisers, in view of the possibility of our at any time losing the command of the sea." The veil is lifted and the murder is out! No words could express more naïvely the entire absence of comprehension of the real problem that confronts "our military advisers." The statement quoted is in direct conflict with the Duke of Devonshire's famous declaration of 1896—"The maintenance of sea supremacy has been assumed as the basis of the system of Imperial defence against attacks from over the sea." The high augurs are not in unison; we are back in the old, extravagant, and disastrous system of government in compartments.

But before pursuing this part of the subject there is a reservation to be made on the naval side. If the Admiralty theory is lucidity itself, it contemplates something more than all will be prepared to admit before the event, namely, the attack and annihilation of the enemy's fleet. It takes two to make a quarrel, and the same number at least to bring on a naval engagement. It is quite certain that our eventual enemies are fully alive to the intentions of our sailors. To think that a foe will obligingly send out his inferior fleet to be crushed in a classic naval engagement is to count too much upon his imprudence. It is perfectly clear that no enemy will risk a sea-fight unless

assured of at least a parity of force, and in view of our past and present naval programmes, and those of other States, it is not easy to see how anything short of a combination of three great navies can give this parity even on paper. In practice, naval alliances are a broken reed to lean upon, for history shows that such alliances are, by a law of their nature, inferior in every respect to an equal force, obeying a single impulse and with but one interest to serve. In these days national fleets have become not only a great material force, but also a great political factor, greater than ever before, and no Power can afford to hazard this vital asset upon a throw of the dice, by a quixotic tournament with a superior fleet. Even victory, in view of the losses it will entail, will lower his position for years to come in relation to his allies, while defeat will place him not only at the enemy's mercy but, what may prove worse, at the mercy of his allies, who are also in a Continental sense his rivals.

As against the great navies of Europe we occupy a central position, strategically enviable beyond expression. Our home territory is poised like a bird of prey over the whole eastern shores of the European continent: not a ship of a northern Power can head for the open sea without either running the terrible gauntlet of the Channel or circumnavigating the north of Scotland. In the first case it is morally certain to be sunk, captured, or driven ashore; in

the second, the length of the voyage, even to the nearest neutral port, forbids the attempt to all but a few cruisers and auxiliaries of great coal-carrying capacity. From Brest on the Atlantic to Kiel and Cronstadt, there are no great natural war-ports save the fine harbours of Holland, accessible to and thoroughly adequate for a great war fleet. This poverty of natural harbours over against our shores has proved one of the greatest obstacles to the invasion of England in the past, and it is no less, but rather more, an obstacle now. Many artificial harbours have been created, Cherbourg for instance, exposed from breakwater to arsenal to the insults and aggression of a watching fleet; Dunkirk, Calais, Boulogne, Havre, and their like, all nests for shells; Hamburg, where during an easterly gale only last November half the shipping was aground—and many others which no sane commander would dare to occupy in war-time.

What, then, will the enemy do? If he can obtain parity of force, locally or generally, he will certainly concentrate and attack, using every artifice and taking all admissible and inadmissible advantage of the initiative and surprise,—for seek where one may, the offensive is deeply engrained into every naval and military code, and it is wise to reckon with the fact. If, however,—and this is the most likely case,—our enemy cannot obtain a parity of force, he will shut up his fleets in the

recesses of his war-ports,—Toulon, Brest, Wilhelmshaven, Kiel, and Cronstadt,—hug them to his breast, and attempt to wear us out by prolonging the war.

If then, in principle, the Admiralty theory is sound and correct, in practice matters will hardly conform with the somewhat rustic simplicity of our beliefs. Our fleets put to sea to smash the enemy's ships and find no ships to smash. They will range the coasts, wreck and ruin the merchant shipping of the foe, but will find their expected prey snugly ensconced in the uttermost recesses of their best war-harbours, waiting until chance, accident, time, or an act of God wears down our crushing superiority.

The conditions are greatly changed. In the old days the fleets required little but fresh water and vegetables to enable them to keep the seas for months at a time: they could, and frequently did, anchor securely on the enemy's coast; there were no long-ranging guns, no torpedo menaces to guard against, and so those "storm-tossed ships" of Mahan's immortal passage kept the sea for years, and became not less but more formidable as their crews became more hardened and injured to their life at sea. To-day no fleet of warships can safely remain for a night within reach of the enemy's coast; the strain will be very great, greater perhaps than we can realise, while every day the complex machinery of our great ships will be liable to those

frequent accidents, slight perhaps in themselves, but entailing the temporary withdrawal of one unit or more from the fighting fleet. It is not an entirely untenable supposition that such strain, if unduly prolonged, will wear out the strongest fleet. It is, therefore, from every point of view to our advantage that the war shall be short and sharp. The offensive? Yes, but how if the enemy refuses to bear a hand? There is only one means to get at the skulking squadrons,—their dens must be knocked about their ears wherever the fleets may be, so that we may get at them. When rabbits will not lie out, we are reduced to ferreting. To be logical, our naval policy should contemplate and prepare for this eventuality, and it does not, while still less does our military policy give grants-in-aid.

No one has ever proposed that our great battleships, costing over a million apiece, should fight with land forts: they are neither designed nor intended for the purpose, and considering the powerful armaments and armoured turrets now employed in their coast defences by some great Powers, it would be suicidal to risk them in such a hurly-burly.

But the work must be done. We want vessels of light draught, armed with the heaviest ordnance, and throwing the heaviest shells, to act against the forts: they should be quite inexpensive and very numerous: they need be little more than floating batteries.

The one great advantage of ships acting against forts is the power the former possess of being able to concentrate all their fire against one work after another, and so ruin the defences piecemeal. It is but the application of a principle which all great leaders on sea or land have employed with unvarying success, namely, concentration of effort against part of the enemy's line of battle. We are certain to have to face this problem the day that the next naval war opens, and it is best to be prepared for it. The present system of putting all our money into ships fit to lie in a line is perfectly sound, but the question we have to ask ourselves is whether we can carry out the task that will clearly lie before us. I say we cannot, until we have the proper vessels and the proper armament for this specific purpose, a service upon which it would be dangerous and extravagant to employ our great sea-going million pounders.

The boast that our frontier is the five-fathom line on our enemy's coast was true in the past—literally true: to-day it is an idle vaunt, since modern coast defences make a five-mile limit still well within the zone of danger of coast-batteries, and a hundred-mile radius within the zone of night action of torpedo-boats.

I venture to submit that I am advocating a measure which Nelson constantly urged, and generally without success. Let me quote but a few sentences

from his despatches. First, he "takes the liberty of observing that the business of laying wood before walls was much altered of late"; next, he complains that it is impossible to get at the convoys, "because they anchor under such batteries as would cripple our fleet." "If the French," he says in another place, "be overtaken and found in some anchorage, it can scarcely be so strong but that I can get at them; but then will be needed things which I have not, fire-ships, bomb-vessels, and gun-boats, when one hour will either destroy or drive them out." "Four hours," he exclaims on another occasion—"Four hours with bomb-vessels would set all in a blaze;" and he is constantly deploring the absence of this weapon in his fleet. Since Nelson's day the torpedo-boat has replaced the fire-ship, but one may con over the list of our gunboats as much as one will and find no type adequately armed and protected to compete with modern coast-batteries of the latest type.

I know most of the great naval arsenals of the Continent by heart, and I affirm that there is hardly one that we cannot tackle and reduce to ruins if we go to work the right way.

Some games are not worth the candle: this one is. *The prize of victory is the enemy's fleet within the fortress: the capture of this fleet gives us the command of the sea: nothing else can give it to us,* and until the enemy's fleet is captured the question of predominance

at sea remains in suspense, and the war itself is indefinitely prolonged.

This is not the only point on the naval side that requires consideration. For the past fifteen years we have been hypnotised by the prospect of a naval war with France, and almost every step we have taken has been with a view to reduce France to impotence within forty-eight hours of the outbreak of war. It is not wise to boast or to skin the bear before it is killed, but it is certain that France would never have submitted to the humiliation of 1898 had she not recognised the hopelessness of a naval struggle with us at that moment. So far, then, our sacrifices have been justified by the results: prevention is better than cure, and the history of the past three years is there to tell us that it is also cheaper.

But in a great naval war against European allies the axis of our strategy is shifted: the North Sea may have as great a part to play as the Channel, the Mediterranean, and the Ocean, and not improbably great events will be decided there. We have made ourselves very secure on the west by the naval bases we have prepared and armed during recent years: to the east we have done little: the work still awaits the master. No one who seriously studies the conditions can deny that in any war which includes the Northern Powers we shall have need of strong naval bases confronting the North Sea, and

it is discreditable to our foresight that we are still without them. We want, besides, a minor base for cruisers in the extreme north of Scotland, since in any war with the Northern Powers it is round the north of Scotland that the great cruisers and merchant pirates will strive to reach the ocean. There are many suitable localities for our purpose on this rock-bound and indented coast, and if the port is linked up by a railway, the fixed defences will demand little cost or labour.

But the hitting power of every navy is doubled by the presence or potential arrival of a strong expeditionary force, capable of setting the final seal of success upon an enterprise happily begun by the fleet.

The threat implied by the expected arrival and landing of an expeditionary force holds the enemy in a constant state of ferment and unrest throughout the entire length of his maritime frontier, and tends to depress confidence and inspire panic. The assailant, infinitely weaker in numbers though he be, has the supreme advantage of the initiative, mobility and surprise. He can arrive by night unseen, disembark, complete the havoc he has planned, and be away in forty-eight hours far from the scene of his success to repeat the operation elsewhere. It is Boer tactics applied to the maritime war of the future.

How does our new Army system aid this measure and

other operations over-seas? We are organising the Army on the basis of five-sixths of it remaining at home, where, unless all our naval theories, practices, sacrifices, and traditions are mere nonsense, they will never see a shot fired.

We want garrisons for our naval bases, that is certain. But other garrisons? The defence of London by 200,000 men? The ring of absurd forts which our wiseacres are constructing round the capital? Did sane man ever conceive such an aberration of the strategic senses?

No one has yet attempted to answer the question, To what purpose are these preparations? Against whom and against what nature of attack are they designed to secure us?

The best defence lies in the attack: we have proved it times out of number throughout our history, and on innumerable battlefields, not one of which has been fought in England. If five-sixths of our land forces were available for over-sea operations and one-sixth organised to sit still at home, instead of *vice versa*, we should be nearer the mark; but even then should grumble, as we paid for the one-sixth at home and merely consent to the measure as a concession to our decadents and to the old women of both sexes. Our resources, though great, are not unlimited. In organising forces which we cannot send abroad and cannot use at home, strategic dementia has reached its climax—the pro-

blem has been solved by the *reductio ad absurdum*.

The question which all those who interest themselves in great problems of national defence are asking is this: How comes it that after Mahan, Colomb, Thursfield, Laughton, and all the series of brilliant writers on naval strategy have laid down for us in letters of gold the plain and incontrovertible principles of national strategy,—how comes it that our War Office should continue to both preach and, to our heavy cost, practise a theory of war which is the exact antithesis instead of the corollary of our naval policy? Buttonhole one of those solemn old gentlemen in Pall Mall whose daily existence has only three fixed points—the office, the luncheon-room at the Rag, and their West Kensington fireside,—stop them and ask them why they ask us to pay for 640,000 men, mostly organised, to do nothing at home; ask them when last England was invaded, and why; ask them who is going to invade us, and how; ask them when last a British battery on the coast fired a shot in anger; ask them when a fort in the interior of England or Scotland was ever of service to man or beast. Ask them—and they will not tell you, because they do not know, and neither does any one else.

I think that the whole matter is susceptible of explanation, but that the explanation itself is thoroughly unsatisfactory. Once I broke my horse's back out hunting. As I was going

home I met a friend and told him of my misfortune. "I am very glad," he said. "Glad!" I exclaimed; "you are a nice Job's comforter; why the deuce are you glad?" "I am glad," he said, "because I have always said that if you did not kill that horse he was perfectly certain to kill you." And that little parable applies to the country and the War Office.

We have had no Moltke and no Von Roon, still less a Scharnhorst, in our modern history: no one has ever yet attempted to inform us for what purpose the Army exists, what contingencies it is expected to provide for, and what strength it should stand at to render us secure. I venture to suggest that all members of Parliament who place patriotism above party should resolutely combine, no matter what Government may be in office, to insist that these questions are answered, and answered satisfactorily. These matters are all capable of exposition, analysis, and deduction, on four pages of foolscap, by any one conversant with the plans of the Admiralty and the resources of our eventual antagonists, the most dangerous strategical hypothesis within the purview of practical politics being taken as the basis of calculation. If, in such estimate, no place will be found for half a million men at home, well,—so much the worse for them.

If we have no Moltke, no Roon, and no Scharnhorst, neither have we any fixed traditions or defined principles for

the guidance of our military policy, and it never seems to occur to Pall Mall that, as it cannot devise a plan, it might do worse than accept the Admiralty theory of war and work on the same lines.

Why are there no principles in Pall Mall, or at least none but bad ones? Because there is no stability. Men come and go, one Commander-in-Chief with his clan, his friends, flatterers, satellites, and toadies, and then another, belonging to a different school, and surrounded like by like: men who dream of Armies, Army Corps, and the whole gamut of Continental frippery, as though blissfully ignorant of the element by which these islands of ours are still happily surrounded. Not one of our military leaders for the last fifty years appears to have been conversant with the firm and undeviating principles which are bred in the bone of our sailors by long and patient study of the past and just appreciation of the present.

The very existence of our *routiniers* of Pall Mall stands apart from and outside the main current of national life, and is separated as far as the poles asunder from the main stream of naval thought. Occupied with the harassing duties of a pettifogging administration, the old gentlemen who sit in Pall Mall have little leisure, even if they had the inclination, and were not too old to learn, to sit at the feet of our naval strategists; and so they continue in the old

heresies, incapable of moving out of the well-worn grooves, until their brief term of office is ended, when they are succeeded by another set from Dum-Dum, or Toungoo, or Ahmednuggur, who replace them in the usual course, and spend the golden hours in endeavouring to get a farrier corporal allotted to the military police at Cairo, or Army Form A.Z. No. 3333 included in the list of stationery which a wretched commander in the field is presented with, as a parting gift, as he leaves Southampton docks. And the long-suffering public foots the bill, and at the glorious end of his term of office Lord X. or Y. or Z., as the case may be, points to a brand-new copper-bottomed fort on Box Hill—labelled “Dangerous to Cyclists”—and asks us to admire and reverence it as the last word of Pall Mall profundity.

Mr Balfour, himself still resting under a suspicion as regards his comprehension of the vital principles of national strategy, has promised us, at the opening of the forthcoming session, a statement concerning our national defences. It is needed. It is necessary for all adherents of the blue-water school of naval strategy to be up and doing in order to arrest the disastrously false direction which our military policy has been permitted to assume.

This much is certain—Pall Mall will fight to its last strand of red tape to keep its idols. Think of the pages of foolscap—most happy term!—with the

long columns all neatly added up, with red-ink totals,—how well I know them!—think of the armies, army corps, divisions, brigades, garrisons, sections of defence, forts, mines, searchlights, and what not, all printed and tabulated and issued confidentially, with the precise number of thousands of Cork militiamen to be quartered at Dorking or Epping on the outbreak of war. Think of the batteries of heavy guns and the enormous supplies of ammunition to be dragged up to the Hog's Back or Ide Hill, or position A or B or C: think of the hopeless confusion of thought it all betrays, and then come back into the invigorating atmosphere of Whitehall, and ponder that nobody wants all this rubbish, and that if they did, it could never be employed. Is there no machinery to control the extravagant follies of Pall Mall? Yes; there are two bodies capable of doing so, and their failure places them on the index and marks them down for reorganisation or extinction.

The first of these is the Naval and Military Committee of Defence, one of the wisest creations of Sir Redvers Buller. Has it accepted the new schemes, as grandiose as useless, without protest? It is hard to believe that the naval members have been so remiss, but it is conceivable that they have not considered it their duty to interfere with a part of the administration that is not their province.

But above them stands the Cabinet and that Olympian im-

posture the Cabinet Committee of Defence, and it is not possible to exonerate this body from blame, since it is armed with plenary powers.

All attempts to extract from the Government any hint of the advice given by these bodies have proved failures. And perhaps happily so, for if the public knew all that passes in these councils, it is conceivable that they would arouse themselves from the indolent lethargy which is such a source of gratification to every Government.

What happens is this. In nearly every department of State questions of every kind have an invariable tendency to gravitate into the hands of a single individual, often quite an unknown and perfectly useless person, who possesses either a thick skin, a plausible tongue, or a facile pen,—one or other or all three,—and he becomes the arbiter of the moment. This person annotates reports, writes memos, advises his Chief, and practically assumes control of the Office by merit of his bump-tious self-assertion. Publicity would be his doom; but, fortunately for him, his precious paragraphs are marked "Secret," printed "For the use of the Cabinet," and stamped all over with a tremendous enunciation of the pains and penalties attaching to the divulgation of State secrets. State secrets indeed! I have no hesitation in saying, from a long and varied experience, that nine times out of every ten

these memos are not worth the paper they are written on. False in statement, false in logic, false in conclusion, they go forward and circulate as words of wisdom, when exposure to the fierce glare of publicity would cause them to be torn in pieces by every hack writer of our well-informed and well-served public press.

Fed on such provender, the members of the Council meet, wearied with the cares of office, and only too glad to find any definite proposal before them; and if a fortunate disclosure of State secrets were ever to give us an insight into those papers and the resolutions framed upon them, the gaiety of nations would receive a very agreeable and exhilarating addition. But all passes in the dark, the harm is done, and all the country knows is that it is asked to pay for 640,000 men who are to be employed in burnishing their arms at home while the Navy is fighting abroad.

The remedy? We shall never have it till we have the Man, and we shall not have the man till Kitchener returns from India and takes over the reins. Meantime we can do something. We are sad laggards, and strange indeed it is that we, whose fleets and armies must ever act so intimately together, have never experimented their mutually interdependent operations, as every other country has done. Combined manœuvres between Army and Navy will be a good means for gradually breaking down the barriers—very real and very formidable

—which now separate the services. They will bring the two together, permit the interchange of ideas, and be profitable to mutual understanding, and it is through understanding alone that sympathy can be aroused and union secured. Joined with this, the Cabinet would do well to order a surprise and general mobilisation of the fleet, for every other Power has practised the work, and none has failed to profit by it.

We have had many inquiries into the state of the Army during the last twenty years, but not one has gone to the root of the matter. The reason is perfectly well known to all those who have been able to observe from the inside the methods of our incomparable constitution. The scope of both inquiry and report of every Committee is strictly confined to the terms of reference laid before them at their first meeting. These terms are drawn up by the Cabinet, and they are generally, if not invariably, worded in a manner to render the labours of the Committee fruitless. The public is soothed by the idea that an inquiry is proceeding, but the Government takes particular pains to tie the hands of the inquirers so that they may not indulge in any dreams of real reform, or compel the initiation of radical measures. In these inquiries we have seen many criticisms passed and reflections made upon one branch of the Army or another, and weaknesses have surpassed them-

selves in discovering all sorts of real or imaginary deficiencies in subordinate branches of our military administration. All this is merely the fringe of the question; the details are important, but they are still details and subsidiary. It is in the grand lines of military policy that we have signally failed, and until these grand lines are laid down in such authoritative manner as to forbid any future dalliance with the vital principles of national strategy, it is really of no consequence whether the details of

a bad system are in themselves good, bad, or indifferent. The fault is in Pall Mall, in the absence of all masculine grasp of great principles, of all real and statesmanlike breadth of view of the strategical needs of the Empire. When the Army is organised and trained for the task it will have to execute in war, and for no other purpose whatsoever, then and only then shall we be able to contemplate the future with a quiet mind, then only achieve the be-all and end-all of national strategy—Security.

THE BALLAD OF LONDON RIVER.

FROM the Cotswolds, from the Chilterns, from your fountains
and your springs,
Flow down, O London river, to the seagull's silver wings :
Isis or Ock or Thame,
Forget your olden name,
And the lilies and the willows and the weirs from which you
came.

Forgo your crystal shallows and your limpid lucid wave,
When the swallows dart and glisten, where the purple blooms
are brave,
For the city's dust and din,
For the city's slime and sin,
For the toil and sweat of Englishmen with all the world to win.

The stately towers and turrets are the children of a day :
You see them lift and vanish by your immemorial way :
The Saxon and the Dane,
They dared your deeps in vain,—
The Roman and the Norman,—they are past, but you remain.

Your Water-Gate stands open o'er your turbid tide's unrest,
To welcome home your children from the East and from the
West,
O'er every ocean hurl'd,
Till the tattered sails are furl'd
In the avenue of Empire, in the highway of the world.

The argosies of Egypt, the golden fleets of Ind,
In streaming flocks and coveys they beat adown the wind :
Heavy with priceless stores
They hover to your doors,
They lay their lordly merchandise on your insatiate shores.

The gallant boy you beckon : to his eager eyes a-gleam
You vaunt your ancient glory, and you haunt his waking dream :
His leaping veins you fire,
His valiant hopes inspire,
And he woos you for the pathway to his utmost heart's desire.

You draw him to his destiny, you lure him to his fate :
With tales of old adventure his soul you subjugate,
 With sounds of quay and creek,
 And the ripple grey and sleek,
And the rough winds in the ratlins where they pipe their sum-
mons bleak.

He sees the wharf and shipyard, the mooring-post and crane,
The dock-bridge swinging open, the bollard and the chain :
 All day the hammers ring,
 All night the flare-lights fling
Their tremulous arms of welcome to the pilgrims that you bring.

Long magic hours he gazes from the Bridge's middle arch,
At the masts in thronging medley, at the sea-hosts on the
 march,
 Whether crowding side by side
 Comes the pageant of your pride,
Or you turn your traffic seaward at the falling of the tide.

The red-sailed barges stagger where the seething vapours
 crawl,
The towering clippers pierce the fog beyond the dim dock wall,
 And the steamers each to each
 Cry out in strident speech,
And the liners hoot and bellow through the murk of Limehouse
 Reach.

He sees forgotten navies in their triumphs and despairs,—
King George's ships, King Charles's ships, are moored by Black-
 wall Stairs :
 The men whose boisterous breath
 Acclaimed Elizabeth,
Their gusty cheering rings to him from out the doors of death.

So you drag him out and onward, so you cast him from the
 shore,
Till he lose the last wan glimmer of the lightship off the Nore :
 To him, to him alone,
 'Neath empty skies unknown,
The sea shall show her sorrows, and her joys shall be his own.

Then you call him, call him, call him, from the ultimate ends of
earth,

You wrench his heart with hunger for the city of his birth :

And his senses you befool,

Till in Rio or Stamboul

He hears the roar of London and the shoutings in the Pool.

And the vessel hurries homeward under sun and under stars,

She flies, all canvas crowded, or she drifts beneath bare spars,

Till the rattling cordage creak,

And the whistling block shall speak,

And the groaning yards make answer, Lo, the haven that we
seek !

The squalors and the splendours that have girt you as you go,

The majesty and meanness, your sons again shall know,

While the grinding hawser slips,

And the falling anchor grips,

And they haul the huddled foresail down in London of the Ships.

.

From the Cotswolds, from the Chilterns, from your fountains
and your springs,

Flow down, O royal river, unpollute of earthly things :

Through the city's dust and din,

Through the city's slime and sin,

Hail us for fighting Englishmen, with all the world to win !

Then swing us to the surges, through the hurricane to grope,

With iron ills to grapple, with crushing odds to cope :

One with your flood are we,

Blood of your blood we be,

Beating eternal measure still to the pulses of the sea.

MAY BYRON.

PRAIRIE TO PACIFIC.

AMERICAN millionaires were the principal import from the U.S.A. into Western Canada during the year 1902. In August and September especially you met them everywhere. They exhausted the champagne in the club cellars; their private cars impeded the traffic on the railroads; they went bumping over the prairie in buckboards, and grumbled humorously at the accommodation in the country hotels; they slept out in the woods after bear and wapiti; they were on board all the steamers, and paddling other people's canoes in more senses than one; some of them looked, and dressed, like small shopkeepers; and some of them were as good fellows as you would wish to meet. Their small-talk was either inquisitorial or autobiographic.

When I got on board the Pullman of the Imperial Limited I felt as if I were in a New York hotel. A Harvard youth, who was on his way to the Rockies to shoot sheep, offered me a light and told me how he had broken his collar-bone at polo; a Wall Street broker gave me a candid and unbiassed opinion of the comparative honesty of American and Canadian politicians, illustrated by personal experiences of his own; a Boston man nearly bit my head off because I spoke irreverently of moose-calling as a form of sport; and a man from Montana wanted to know why I, personally, did not build a

new hotel in Winnipeg? They told me what they thought about the Boer war—videlicet, that they wouldn't mind licking the British themselves, but that they didn't want anybody else to do so; and they asserted gleefully that the entire American army, with drums beating and colours flying, were still hunting for Aguinaldo's aged mother in the Philippines. When we got into Calgary—which they pronounced with the accent on the penultimate—they flocked, hatless, on to the platform, and kodaked every mounted policeman and every Indian who came within range. Then they turned their backs on the white peaks of the Rockies, standing out sharp and dazzling against the blue sky, and listened to the dining-car conductor's eulogium of the new brewery; and then they waved me a farewell from the tail-end of the Pullman, and told me to rejoin them at Banff.

The streets of Calgary, with their grey stone buildings, reminded one of a country town in Scotland. The population appeared to be composed principally of Englishmen, in Norfolk jackets with leather shoulders, and Stetson hats; Chinamen with pigtails and loose blouses; "pinto," or skewbald horses, with Mexican saddles; pointers, fox-terriers, setters, and "long dogs" crossed between wolf- and stag-hound. The floods had been out recently, and the

river banks were littered with saw-logs; on the low-lying ground were mud-spattered houses tilted up at all sorts of angles, windowless, doorless, and shamelessly flaunting their nakedness to the outer world. Above them were rolling hills of green grass, and league-long wire-fences with posts of B.C. cedar and jack-pine,—for the big ranches are being gradually crowded farther west, and in the late fall the cattle are driven from the “foothills” in their thousands, to be slaughtered and packed away in cold storage, thereby saving their winter feed. My driver pointed with pride to the *abattoir*, a sinister dark-red building, round which wolfish-looking dogs were fiercely wrangling over the offal, and I was not sorry to drop down again to the rapids of the Bow River, and then swing round over the short smooth turf to the Ranchman’s Club, there to talk horse and inspect a litter of Borzoi puppies which looked like half-shaven red rats.

For some fifty or sixty miles after Calgary you travel through the ranching country; past rounded, grassy foothills, and under river benches that rise, terrace above terrace, to long narrow plateaux; and then you see in front of you a mighty barrier of rock and precipitous cliff—tall, sheer, and straight, as far as the eye can reach on either side; smeared with faint mildewy green along the base; scored and furrowed down the face, and crowned with irregular peaks of sparkling snow and

ice. You catch your breath as you swing suddenly round the gap between two great battlemented walls—and then you are a little disappointed, for on one side of you are tall, pallid crags and colossal mounds of drab, dried earth, that look as though the children of the Titans had built gigantic mud-pies and left them to bake in the sun. The guide-books will not tell you this, and, indeed, the scenery soon afterwards is so marvellous in its grandeur and beauty that the first impression fades away and is forgotten. The river below you is a milky blue, fringed with purple flowers: under the lee of a little green island is a raft of brown logs, but the mountains themselves are somehow featureless and dingy, and it is only the fact that it takes you so long, first to reach, and then to pass, a particular hill, which enables you to realise its colossal size.

At the summit of the Kananaskis Pass Captain Palliser camped on August 22, 1858, at half-past four in the afternoon, near a small lake about half an acre in area, “where there was some tolerable grass for the horses. From this lake flow the first waters we had seen which descend to the Pacific Ocean. With these waters we supplied our tea-kettle, while our scanty supper of tough elk-meat was boiling in the waters of the Saskatchewan.”

Near Canmore the banks of the river are carved into fantastic columns like huge yellow

organ-pipes, where the soft deposits have been washed away and left monstrous pillars of hard conglomerate, known locally as "hoodoos"; on your left the ragged escarpment of the Rundle Mountains towers 5000 feet above the valley of the Bow; and on the opposite side is Cascade Mountain, just a couple of feet lower, with a foaming stream leaping from crag to crag down its steep slope of naked rock. Rundle was a Wesleyan missionary from near Edmonton, who camped here in 1841, shortly after Sir George Simpson's whirlwind expedition of five thousand miles in twelve weeks of actual travel; and "Cascade" is the English equivalent of the Indian name, meaning "Mountain where the water falls." In those days it was a favourite resort for white goat and grey sheep, and Dr Hector relates how one of the former was wounded, and stood on a ledge beside the waterfall for seven days, till it fell over the precipice, and the hunters found that it had been shot in five different places.

There are too many tourists at Banff nowadays to suit the bighorns. When our train arrived in the early morning the sleeping-cars emptied themselves promptly, and the passengers crowded round the bus of the Hot Springs Hotel, and clamoured to the conductor for rooms. That dignitary held a written list in his hand, and called out the names of a chosen few. The rest returned disgusted to the train, and went on to try their luck at Field, or

Laggan, or Glacier. I had taken the precaution to telegraph a week ahead, and drove proudly off up a long winding avenue of spruce and pine and Douglas fir to the green point above the falls of the Bow River where the railway company cleared away the jungle fourteen years ago and built a sort of combination of Swiss chalet, and bungalow, and baronial hall, lit by electricity, with sulphur baths, and swimming-tanks, and billiard-tables, and Swiss guides, and lady orchestras, and balconies, and terraces,—all perched some 4700 feet above the level of the sea in the heart of the everlasting hills.

It was the strangest mixture of civilisation and barren wilderness. Nearly 75 per cent of the visitors were Americans, 20 per cent travelling Englishmen and Australians, and the rest Canadians. There were Alpine Club men, long and sinewy, with thin, tanned faces; there was an Australian who looked like a typical John Bull, with a son who looked like a typical Cornstalk; there were peers and parsons; there were American girls—some in diamonds, some who knew the scientific names of every moss and lichen in the neighbourhood, some who discussed their private affairs for the benefit of every one in the room, and others who said very little but absorbed everything they saw silently; and there was a Personally Conducted Party from my own native land. The conductor was a big, important-looking man, with

a face that reminded you of a bull-frog, and he thoroughly understood the art of *réclame*. In every place in Canada at which the party stopped their arrival was heralded in the newspapers. They were representatives of all that was best in literature and science and art in the mother country. When the average Canadian saw them, he looked at the average Englishman and winked, as who should say, "There! didn't I always tell you?" When the average Englishman saw them he ran away. The women were long and angular, the brims of their straw hats drooped over their noses, and they carried Huntley & Palmer's tin biscuit-boxes tied round with string in one hand; in the other they had red baize bags like K.C.'s. Most of the men were quite small, with big beards and long hair. There were school-boys who had overgrown their strength, and tutors in flannel caps and blazers, whose portraits you will find in the works of Mr Jerome K. Jerome. All their individuality had become merged in that of the conductor. They asked his permission before they went into meals (this is an actual fact; the Boston girl never let me forget it), and they stood by and gazed at him admiringly while he announced to a dumfounded audience that they were travelling in their own reserved car! The Philadelphia man—all the fittings in his private car are silver, including the door-hinges—looked at him long and

thoughtfully, and then he turned to the man from Boston and said, "See here! If you'll give that fellow a licking, I'll pay the fine and the costs of the court."

If they had been Americans I could have made that Boston girl sit up. As it was——

I went out on to the terrace behind in the sun, and looked through a vista of tall, tapering, dark-green firs. On the left there was a rugged, sombre, grey precipice topped with pines; in front were two dove-grey crags with high white peaks beyond. To the right was a valley under a razor-backed mountain like a thresh-er's fin. Between the trees in front I caught a glimpse of the blue Bow, and in my ears was the rustling of the leaves of the white poplar, and the singing, rippling surge of the falls three hundred feet below.

We scrambled and slid down over a smooth carpet of pine-needles to the little bridge, under which the Spray River dashes and tumbles along at ten miles an hour, emerald green in the pools, grey over the pebbles, and clear as crystal everywhere; under the shadow of spruce and jack-pine; over stony beaches, curving round the base of a slaty promontory, capped with a thin line of sentinel firs; till it merges in the milky blue of the glacier-fed Bow. A little above their confluence the latter slides down in a steep cascade of dazzling foam between huge slabs of rock, pushed aside and piled up on either bank, and then slackens in translucent

patches of sapphire and brown agate: below again are little wooded islands.

We rode all round the valley another day, on little western ponies that seemed to crawl up the side of a mountain like flies on a window-pane; we halted beside a strangely dappled tarn of pallid green and white at the foot of a stupendous wall of bare rock; we saw more hoodoos, that looked like a ruined castle in the distance, and like great kobolds in grave-clothes when you got closer; we bathed in the long swimming-bath, where the water has a temperature of 103°, and is about as buoyant as the sea; we crawled along a dark passage-way into a cave, where there was a basin of clear blue water that smelt of sulphur, under a roof that was carved by Nature into the similitude of horrible vampires and were-wolves; and at night we sat beside the big open fireplace in the main hall, and talked about shooting and hunting and trapping and American politics; and everybody, Americans and Canadians, Australians and English, stood up when the Ladies' Orchestra played "God save the King."

After Banff we ran through a valley of dead pines into a stormy waste of mountains, of dark gorges and rocky precipices; of shiny yellow cliffs, and ragged pinnacles of snow. From the summit of one hung a great motionless cataract of gleaming ice, and round the rocky cliffs at its base were white foaming waves frozen into straining stillness. There was a battlemented castle, with

towers and turrets and bastions, and a huge isolated mass, shaped like a knight's helmet, standing a mile above the surrounding valleys; there were citadels, and ledges, and leaning pyramids, and gloomy ravines, till the eye got dazed, and the tired brain refused to grasp their chaotic complexity.

They put on an "observation" car at Field, with a raised platform at each end and a glazed roof. Every seat was occupied before I got there, so I went to talk to the engine-driver. While I was doing this the train started, and I sat down on a narrow seat right alongside the boiler, whence I could look straight ahead of the train, and walk along to the cow-catcher if I wanted to. As we hurtled on, in the teeth of a rushing wind, the hissing of the steam and the pulsing throb of the machinery seemed to restore my self-respect a little; for, after all, man, masterful and unafraid, had faced this frowning barrier and forced his way clear through to the sea. Still, even the engine-driver and the fireman would pause and gaze at the scenery time after time with a rapt far-away look in their faces, and they laughed when I asked them if they ever got tired of it. On the summit, at the Great Divide, a little triangular wooden frame, like a surveyor's landmark, showed the point where a thread-like stream split in two, and half a wine-glassful of water poured above the fork would find its way to the Pacific, and the other half to

the Atlantic Ocean. The great Cathedral Peak seemed to thrust up to heaven like a flaming sword, and on the shoulder of Mount Stephen was a toppling glacier that hung menacingly over the lesser crags beneath. Far below us was an old river-bed fringed with yellow sedge, and a great bank of clouds threw purple shadows on the pine-forests.

At Palliser we met the Atlantic Express, otherwise known as "No. 2." Her engine was drinking copiously and untidily from the water-tank; and we slipped off down a side line, and amused ourselves by shunting a few cars while we waited for our turn. The crews and passengers disembarked in spite of the straight-falling rain, and exchanged greetings among the misty hills, rent here and there by sun-patches. The grey-coated coloured porters grinned amicably across the track, and the two engines whined impatiently at one another, till a sudden throbbing whistle told us that No. 2 had quenched her thirst and was off again. Then we rattled back to the main line, and stopped and shrieked imperatively under the great hose-pipe, and swilled and hissed and purred to show our satisfaction; afterwards thundering down a fathomless, echoing gorge, whose towering walls seemed to meet overhead and shut out the light of day. Far below us the Kicking Horse River plunged and raced in a furious cataract of foam, flinging from one side of the chasm to the other, and scooping out

hollows in the solid rock, while the wind raved past us like the blast from a great furnace.

Just forty-four years ago, a dozen miles or so higher up, one of Dr Hector's pack-horses plunged into the stream to escape the fallen timber. Luckily there was an eddy there, but the banks were so steep that they had great difficulty in getting him out. "In attempting to catch my own horse," says the explorer, "he kicked me in the chest; but I luckily got close to him before he struck out, so that I did not get the full force of the blow. However, it knocked me down, and rendered me senseless for some time." And because of this accident the men named it the Kicking Horse River, and it is so called to this day.

At Golden we were in daylight again, and running under the Selkirks, and beside the broad, stately Columbia River.

The great main chain of the Rockies runs from the city of Mexico to the Arctic Ocean, a distance of 5000 miles. West of the Canadian main chain lie the Selkirk and gold ranges, which Mr W. D. Wilcox, an American authority, groups together. The "Coast" range, as its name implies, is still nearer the Pacific Ocean; while Vancouver Island, and other islands to the north, form, geologically speaking, a fourth range of the same system. In Colorado the mountains attain a height of 13,000 feet or 14,000 feet, and the system extends for 1000 miles from west to east. The Canadian Rockies rarely exceed 11,000 feet or 12,000 feet

above sea-level; but on account of their steepness and their great snow-fields they are far more impressive. The same writer tells us that the eastward movement of the atmosphere, carrying moisture from the Pacific, causes condensation and heavy rainfall as the air-currents pass over the Selkirks, leaving the air robbed of much moisture to pass over the next range to the east. For this reason the mountains, although averaging 1000 feet lower than the corresponding part of the main range, seem white and brilliant in comparison. The heavy rains in summer produce a rankness of vegetable growth, the huge tree-trunks and the boulders being covered with mosses, ferns, and lichens. Owing to the deep erosion of mountain streams the valleys are narrower and more precipitous, and, lastly, the cloud effects are superb. Trees generally cease to grow at an altitude of 7000 feet or 7500 feet, though dwarf bushes of heath and alpine plants will flourish up to 8800 feet. The commonest tree is the spruce, with its single tapering bole and small downward-bending branches. The balsam fir is very similar, but has a smoother bark. On the main range the Lyall's larch, with its bright yellow needles, forms a sort of golden fringe between the darker spruce and the bare rocks above. The great cedars, with shreddy bark hanging in strips and spreading foliage; the hemlocks, with their "delicate spray"; the Douglas fir,

reaching a height of 200 or 300 feet—half a million square feet of it have been cut off one acre,—all these are characteristic trees of the Rockies. The damage done by forest-fires is heart-breaking. At night, during the months of July, August, and September, you will see on the side of a mountain a great crater of white flame. In the daytime the dun smoke-clouds will hang over the valleys like a pall; you will travel for hours through charred and grey-powdered skeletons, the thin outer shells of classic trees; the burnt bare soil is littered with dry blackened sticks; and here and there you can see the red core of embers eating through the live wood like a cancer. Then the young growth begins again: on the prairie the white poplar follows the conifers, but on the mountains pines follow spruce and balsam, or *vice versa*. There is no doubt that some of these fires arise from causes beyond the control of man; but too many of them are purposely started by prospectors, to save themselves trouble in travelling or in searching the hillsides for minerals.

The mountains, the cataracts, the glaciers, the valleys, the trees—everything about him—is on such an immense scale that man feels a vague inclination to assert himself, and usually lapses into slang as a sort of antilimax. We all of us marvelled at the sublime cheek of the human beings who seriously undertook to cut a railway through British

Columbia. The first survey party started work on July 20, 1871. They spent 3½ million dollars in surveying eleven different lines before the final selection. Of the lives lost by drowning, by forest-fires, by slips where a mis-step was fatal, by sheer hard work and privation, no count has been kept. In 1880 the control and management was handed on by the Government to private individuals. They spent 140 million dollars in construction, and drove the last spike at Craigellachie on November 7, 1885, and ran the first train across the Dominion the following year—five years before the time stipulated for by their contract. It was the kind of instance that would rejoice the hearts of Herbert Spencer and Auberon Herbert.

From Golden to Donald the railway follows the Columbia between the Rockies and the Selkirks, and then rises, at the rate of 116 feet to the mile, for mile after mile, till the river is a pale-green ribbon in the forested valley 1000 feet below, and then we run through a narrow cleft between Mount Tupper and Mount Macdonald, towering vertically a mile above us, into Rogers' Pass. It took two years of unceasing toil before Major Rogers and his party discovered this route through the Selkirk range, along a valley a couple of thousand feet in depth. The men who worked for him will tell you how their leader urged and drove and cajoled them, promising to immortalise them by calling different peaks after

their names: they say that he could only sleep from sheer bodily exhaustion, and that he could never realise that his followers were not as tireless as himself. Two or three miles farther we skirt along the snowsheds, with their massive sloping roofs, intended to curtain off avalanches, and then we run into the great plateau of glaciers that covers an area of forty square miles. The "Great Glacier" is only a mile and a half away, and a few hundreds of feet above the hotel and the railway, over which it hangs like a sword of Damocles. Behind them Mount Abbott unrolls a tapestry of fir and spruce, and on the left Sir Donald rises like a blunted spear, with the engrailed peaks of the Hermit range, and Mount Cheops, a perfect pyramid, to the west.

Nine people out of ten, when they are running through the mountains in a train, begin to talk platitudes about the littleness of man "in comparison with the mighty works of nature." If they realise this immediately they must have a facility for detachment which has been denied to the writer, or else they are moralising because it is the proper thing to do. While everything about you is on an enormous scale, it is also in proportion. You have to get off the cars and look at the train before it strikes you that a C.P.R. engine is a mere toy after all. You can measure your own height against that of the beetling precipice above you, and your reason tells you that

the one is infinitesimal in comparison with the other. But as you look round at the endless wilderness of peaks, your physical identity becomes merged in your surroundings. You catch a glimpse of a dog-kennel with a hole in the side which it would puzzle a fox-terrier to get through, and then it suddenly strikes you that this is a human habitation. But after you have been travelling for days, after you have lived in a doll's house yourself, you begin to dread the obsession of the mountains; to realise that you are hemmed in on all sides by a great tossing sea of cliffs, and crags, and snow-clad inaccessible peaks, and hanging glaciers; to understand how men who have lived among them for months will get cowed and cringe under their imminent, perpetual despotism, till at last they flee to the prairie or to the sea from a thraldom that has become intolerable.

We had dropped the dining-car at Banff to economise weight in the steep grades beyond, and all the passengers raced up to the Glacier House for dinner. The residents under the long verandah regarded us with calm disdain; a few of us had managed to secure rooms by telegraphing beforehand, and the rest scrambled for seats in a long, low, old-fashioned dining-room, with small-paned windows, and masses of flowers everywhere. Next day we wandered up to the glacier through a forest of pine and spruce and tamarack, carpeted with berries and festooned with hanging moss; and then we

left the Selkirks behind us, the ice-fields shining with a phosphorescent glimmer in the moonlight, above the black shadows of the tree-line.

The Gold Range is crossed by the Eagle Pass, little more than a mile wide, but inlaid with lovely lakes which crowd the railroad close to the mountain-side. Thirty years ago Mr Walter Moberly, C.E., while engaged in a preliminary survey, saw an eagle fly up a narrow opening into the heart of these unexplored crags. Taking this literally as an auspice, he followed the bird's flight, and thereby discovered the only practicable passage across the range.

We woke up the following morning to find ourselves at the entrance to the cañons of the Fraser River. The railway runs along a rocky ledge; the river storms headlong down alongside it, but hundreds of feet below, in swift, throbbing rushes, and broken masses of tumbling foam, and green, sunlit whirlpools. In the days of the gold-fever they built a road along its banks, known as the Caribou (*Cerf-bœuf*) Trail, and even now you can see the fractured trestles pinned high up on the opposite cliff, where they used to drive a four-horse stage in the days when the possibility of steam traffic was still a dream. Before this there were three possible routes: 1st, the old Mule Trail, never open till June; 2nd, the Lower Cañon Trail, only passed when the water was low, at which time there was a ledge of boulders along the bottom of the cliff;

and 3rd, the Upper Trail, passed from range to range at a height of from 50 feet to 100 feet above the river. In the summer-time the stream tears along at the rate of 20 miles an hour, and when Commander Mayne, F.R.G.S., was here in 1859 he tells us that it flowed at 15 or 16, as he ascertained by actual experiment. In places he and his party had to clamber along on their hands and feet. The peaks rose 1000 ft. and more above them, although they were probably 600 feet or 800 feet above the river, that whirled along gurgling and reverberating in deafening echoes below. When they reached boulders (bluffs of rock jutting into the river) they had either to scramble to the upper ledge, or to round them, for which purpose the Indians suspended poles by native rope, made of deer-hide and fibres, from the top of the cliff, the inner end of the first and third resting on the trail, the middle one crossing the two on the front of the bluff. There was nothing to lay hold of; you simply stretched out your arms, clasping the rock and keeping your face close to it. If you got dizzy and made a false step, the pole swung away, and you toppled 1000 feet into the torrent below. "And yet in 1859 Governor Douglas saw a man at Fort Yale who had actually come down through the cañons lashed to a large block of timber." He must have been in a hurry!

There were Chinamen washing gold in the sandbanks here and there; and Indians sitting on wooden stages that projected

out from the banks, hauling up salmon in scoop-nets; there were strangely decorated graveyards, and joss-houses, and high crossed poles with split fish hanging up to dry. Below Spuzzum (Phœbus! what a name!) the train runs into a long tunnel and out into daylight at Yale, where the Hudson Bay Company's men used to rest and dry out their furs before the long climb up the cañons. Here is the head of navigation, for even steamers are unable to make headway against the raging torrent above. After this, the Fraser widens into a broad, smooth river, dotted with Indian canoes and "dug-outs," that look exactly like overgrown wooden toothpicks; the mountains diminish and recede into blue haze; the trees grow bigger; the valleys widen out, and we pass orchards laden down with fruit, flowers, and thick foliage of green and gold and copper-red. Then we skirt along the tide-waters of the Pacific, inlets of sapphire and emerald, till we reach the long wharfs where the ocean steamers from China and Australia, New Zealand and the Hawaiian Islands, San Francisco and Alaska, are moored; where the docks are piled high with yellow lumber from the great saw-mills, and with bales of silk, and tea, and sealskins,—the sixteen-year-old city of Vancouver, and the western terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

The city is built on a peninsula, fronting on Burrard Inlet (so called by Vancouver after "Sir Harry Burrard of the

Navy"), which lies at the foot of the Cascade Mountains: far away to the west you can see the dim blue line of Vancouver Island. To the south-west, in American territory, is the long wavy crest, thick-maned with snow, of the Olympian range; to the south-east Mount Baker looms up, a great white dome, faintly flushed with gold. At your feet are inlets and islands innumerable; the houses are buried in green foliage and bright flowers; the harbour is dotted with white sails, and tall masts, and Indian canoes, and big steamships. The town itself is only sixteen years old, and has been fire-swept once in that time, but to-day it has over 30,000 inhabitants, and even the American millionaires marvelled at its miles of asphalt streets, and the solidity of its buildings. The "bell boys" at the hotel were Japs, with the figures of boys of fourteen, and the faces of men of forty. They were dressed in brown tight-fitting suits and brass buttons, and the Boston girl was never tired of watching them trip across the hall with a regular "Geisha" wobble, whenever the bus arrived with passengers from the station. But they were civil and obliging, and even the "elevator boy" kept his eyes glued on an Anglo-Japanese dictionary while he was running his cage up and down. There was a big verandah in front and a crowd of tourists from Alaska, most of them carrying gaudy little totem-poles, which they proudly assured you were family trees of remote antiquity, though

they looked as if they had been carved yesterday by an ingenious schoolboy with a jack-knife. Among the tourists I noticed two women in particular, garbed in long shapeless waterproofs and battered old straw hats, who looked like farmers' wives from the backwoods. One of them had a watch, pinned on to the outside of her cloak, the back of which was crusted with enormous pearls, and the other wore the very biggest diamonds I have ever seen set in a ring. The *Empress of China* had just come in, and the rotunda was crowded with sunburnt travellers from the Far East, who addressed the bell boys in a sort of pidgin English. The Personally Conducted Party from my own land had also arrived, hung all over with field-glasses and cameras, like Christmas-trees, and they were engaged in reading their family letters out loud to their cicerone. Two or three quiet-looking Australians were taking in the whole scene from the newspaper counter, and a Winchester boy, with a school ribbon round his hat, was chaffing the nigger barber. By-and-by we saw the American consul bearing down on us in the distance, and the Boston man, who is a Personage in his own country, grabbed his daughter with one hand and myself with the other and ran us precipitately through a side-door. Then he breathlessly hailed a cab, and told the driver to take us to Stanley Park at a two-minute clip.

The Park is a promontory, forming the extremity of the peninsula on which the city is

built. The drive round is a distance of ten miles, and the interior is practically unbroken forest. There are rides cut hither and thither, which wind through colonnades of firs and scented cedar, hung with trailing lianas and carpeted with moss, to groves where the great trees shoot up, straight and stately, for 300 feet above your head. Some of the cedars are over 50 feet in girth round the bole; one giant, 300 years old, had enclosed a fallen trunk beneath its roots, and the wood of the latter was as sound and fresh as if it had fallen yesterday. The ferns grow half as high again as a tall man's head, and even find nourishment among the branches 50 or 60 feet from the ground; the long green and grey moss hangs on pendent tresses from the boughs, and the turf is ablaze with flowers. The waters of the Pacific are beating on the shore; and through tressures of leaves you catch glimpses of blue inlets under frowning cliffs; the sea-gulls look no bigger than butterflies; on the other side of the bay are little white red-roofed houses under hanging woodlands of fir and spruce; far away to the left is a trailing cloud from an Eastern-bound steamer; inland is a heavy pall of tawny smoke from the forest-fires; and at your feet is a flotilla of Songhi canoes, and little hurrying yachts.

After dinner we sat on the verandah at the back of the club and looked across the harbour at the Couchant Lions and the Sleeping Beauty. As a rule, I am hopelessly stupid in catching profiles in rocks and mountains. The innumerable busts of Napoleon and Wellington, and old witches, and cowed hermits, simply worry me, or tempt me to lie at once and have done with it. But the Couchant Lions that guard the gateway into Vancouver are as clear and distinct as those in Trafalgar Square, and the Sleeping Beauty is no more difficult to make out than her namesake in the moon, whom she somewhat resembles. As the sun dipped, the waters of the inlet turned to the dim rippled blue of damascened steel under the deep purple shadows of the mountains, the Chinamen on board the yellow-funnelled *Athenian* began a sort of riot on a small scale—they are kept "in bond" like cigars, and not allowed to land without paying duty—and their shrill staccato jabber sounded weird and uncanny in the gathering darkness, the electric lights in the town and on board the ships flashed into sudden brilliance, and the smoke of the forest-fires vanished, to give place to a flickering sea of white flame that threw a red glow on the northern sky.

CHAS. HANBURY-WILLIAMS.

LETTERS TO A LITERARY ASPIRANT.

(Being an Anatomy of Art contained in a few letters addressed to Mr —, and now published by permission of the writer.)

I.

MY DEAR NEPHEW,—With a view to benefiting your race, perpetuating your memory, obtaining a ready passport to agreeable society, and—incidentally—increasing your income, you propose to write a book. And with a modesty and candour that surprise as much as they delight me, you desire in the first place some knowledge of how to construct this edifice of fancy. I admit that you might apply to a more responsible authority, but scarcely to one who would suffer so little inconvenience in parting with his philosophy. Furthermore, I observe that you give your mentor an entirely free hand, and apparently are prepared to welcome with equal cordiality his directions for compiling a theological treatise, a volume of roundels, or a book of cricketing statistics. That, no doubt, is the true spirit of learning, and by going to a sufficient variety of sources you should in time accumulate much interesting information. My own contribution to this fund will, however, deal only with those works of Imagination in Prose which are known as Novels; and to the best of my ability I shall try to show you how these are done. I should like you to remember, by the way, that if, now and then, I in-

stinctively make an ingratiating affectation of diffidence, this is not to be taken quite seriously.

In its relations to Life the Novel is like the letters L-I-F-E which spell it,—as much an affair of symbols, conventions, and associations, and composed on as arbitrary a plan, as the shape and order of those letters. It is as though out of an endless coil of string, inextricably tangled, one cut a little piece with two clear ends, arranged it in an orderly pattern, and drew a picture of that. This picture would neither be string nor endless tangle, and no more is the Novel Life.

Your question now is (or ought to be if you are attentively following the argument), How am I to perform with Life the equivalent of this feat?

Well, my nephew, you first choose from the tangle of loving and lying and disinheriting and sinning and repenting and quarrelling and dying, and all the other things that go on in the world, some bit that already suggests a pattern. This is the Original Idea, and the thinking of it is technically termed the Inspiration.

Next, you cut out this bit or idea from the rest of the tangle

and arrange it nicely, so as to have two ends, with some neat little loops and flourishes between. That is to say—to come more literally to the business in hand—you furnish the idea with suitable details, and provide the necessary characters, cutting into their lives at the moment the story opens, leaving everything in their existence unrecorded while they are on your stage except the events you wish them to take part in, and finally dismissing them for ever when these events have come to an orderly ending.

This is called the Plot, as it is, or should be, in your head, and it is evident that already a great departure has taken place from the real complexity and illogicality of life.

Lastly, you draw a picture of this; that is to say, you put your plot into the most appropriate words your vocabulary supplies. With this process, which is termed Literary Labour, all trace of actuality disappears. Instead of creatures of three dimensions and various colours performing a million complicated motions in a world as intricate as themselves; instead even of the bright, fragmentary picture of them in your mind's eye,—you have now merely some little symbols all black and of two dimensions only, which simply set the reader's mind working, and make it, if they can, retrace the actual road and see the countries of which they are the map. If your hero goes into battle and you wish to convey the roaring of cannon, you write

the word "bang" with a note of exclamation. If he kisses the heroine, you describe this electrifying sensation by saying "he was transported with rapture." In fact you simply say to your reader, "Kindly conjure up so-and-so as vividly as possible. I shall supply you with a set of words to assist your imagination"; much as a doctor supplies a draught and the patient does the rest.

Your object, then, at every stage in your novel-making must be to discover the water-worn channels in your reader's mind, so that by means of one of these your own stream of romance may flow more readily and make a goodlier torrent; otherwise your symbols might be Chinese characters instead of English for all the images they will awaken in his brain. It is precisely here that the cunning and experienced professional scores his points and makes his income; and the most useful, and I flatter myself unique, feature of these epistles will be the illustrations of how this is done, and the short cut you will learn thereby to the orchard of experience.

First for a moment let us consider this reader's mind, and let it be an average sample, the mind of "the man in the street," as the phrase is. It will be found to enter with pleasure to itself and profit to you into certain old situations and ancient problems, time after time, probably till life ceases on the earth. To give you an exhaustive list of these would scarcely be fair to less happily advised contemporaries.

aries, but here are one or two to try your new nib upon. Any obvious blend of the pathetic and heroic (*e.g.*, expiring soldier simultaneously saving colours and exclaiming "Mother!"); Impropropriety seriously, and Religion melodramatically treated; Love when crossed, indiscreet, or what an eminent man has called "kitchy-witchy"; and the whole field of Crime. Dozens more you will doubtless discover for yourself, but each item I have mentioned may be guaranteed to have a path ready made for it in the mind we are considering.

Your obvious road to success, then, is along one of these paths, and in choosing your particular right-of-way I should strongly advise you to follow one of two principles. Either take a well-trodden, advertised-by-all-tourist-agencies, popular road—as, for instance, a county family with a doubtful succession to the baronetcy and a mystic bracelet; or else make a daring affectation of originality. Let

your hero be a red-haired amateur chimney-sweep, for example, and let him have an encounter with a rattlesnake in a flue; the scene being laid in some South American republic nobody has yet written about. All Defoe and most of Smollett can thus be palmed off as "fresh," or even "striking."

Sometimes, it is true, the most astonishing results may be obtained by an appeal to seldom-touched sympathies and curiosities; or by simply holding up to Nature so bright a mirror that passers-by are arrested by the very clearness of the reflection: but to do these things successfully requires a habit of independent reflection and a self-confidence in employing material thus ground out of experience, that I cannot take for granted in laying down general principles for a Man of Letters. Besides, if you are so much cleverer than your uncle as this would imply, what is the use of my instructing you?—Your affectionate and well-intentioned UNCLE.

II.

MY DEAR NEPHEW,—To come now to the kernel of the matter. You have decided, let us say, to make an appeal to that love of robust adventure and the more elementary virtues which so honourably distinguishes Englishmen. Suppose you select as your original idea the fascinating notion of a young man who shall come into his own, or somebody else's, patrimony after many hairbreadth

adventures, winning on his way a beautiful wife, though owing to her excess of maidenly innocence he shall not at first perceive that she reciprocates his affection. (This, you will remember, is called the Inspiration.) Make the period some epoch in history when stirring events would naturally be imagined by your reader to occur; and to convey an even livelier glamour of gallantry, let the scene be

France, as has been so fashionable of late. Finally, let your hero tell his adventures himself in a simple and confiding fashion.

In the following illustration of this method notes upon the mechanism have been placed in rectangular brackets.

It was in the spring-time of 1546 [the last three figures being transposable], upon a day thereafter printed indelibly upon my memory, that the Duc summoned me to his ante-chamber. As I passed down the long passage leading from the battlement to the armoury I saw through a crevice in the venerable stones one fleeting glimpse of white clouds, blue river, and green fields that uplifted my boyish heart like Bordeaux wine.

[Or, grey clouds, black river, and white fields that depressed, &c., like a Bordeaux pigeon. The whole tone is given in this meteorological sentence, while the simile is intentionally French in either case.]

"M. le Duc is strange this morning," said Pierre.

He stood on guard before my uncle's apartments, as he had guarded my grandfather's before him in the Wars of the Jacquerie and League.

[Note how the relationships of all these persons and the precise period of history are neatly indicated in one brief sentence. There is no pausing over uninteresting preliminaries in romantic fiction.]

"How so?" I asked.

"He has not called for

his chocolate," responded the grizzled henchman.

[This is subtle. "I have noticed a stream of blood flowing under the door" would be the obvious retort. It would indicate an amateur hand, however.]

I drew aside the curtain and entered, and then I paused in uncertainty how to proceed. Instead of the customary "Parbleu, Anatole, vous êtes toujours!" with which my uncle welcomed me on the rare occasions on which I was summoned to his presence, I heard nothing but the ticking of the Rhenish eight-day clock and the tap-tapping of ivy-leaves upon the window-pane.

[Observe the verisimilitude gained by reduplicating "tap."]

"Mon uncle le Duc, Je suis here! Where êtes vous?" I called out.

But there was no need to ask. With a dagger driven hard into his heart, the Duc Raoul Saint Cristophe de la Mangerie-Rôchvallénciène lay stark upon the floor of his boudoir.

Even in death he looked what indeed he was—a great nobleman of France; and then and there I dipped my young fingers in his blood and vowed that if I, Anatole Jean de la Mangerie-Rôchvallénciène, were given life and strength, his murderer would some day lie even as he lay.

[This terrible threat becomes even more terrible by its slight—and intentional—indirectness.]

"Close the doors! Down with the portcullis! Let

not the assassin escape!" I screamed with all the strength of my youthful lungs.

I was answered by a light girlish laugh.

"Monsieur is very much in earnest," said a soft voice behind me.

I turned as though I had been struck, and there, in that chamber which the moment before had held only the dead and myself, stood a fair and slender figure crowned with an aureole of golden hair; and I found myself looking into a pair of eyes whose singular spell held me staring like a country booby while you could have counted twenty.

[This unaffected confession of weakness is characteristic of the modern romantic hero. See David Balfour and all his variations.]

"Mademoiselle——?" I stammered.

"Monsieur?" she smiled.

"I am unable," I began, with all the dignity I could muster, "to account for this——"

"Intrusion?" she inquired.

"Honour," I replied with a low bow, not unworthy, I thought to myself, of a de la Mangerie-Rôchvallénciène.

[In fact, it is quite unnecessary to account for it at all; for in this branch of art the incidents need merely be picturesque in themselves and follow so closely at the heels of one another as to leave no time for criticism. I shall give an instance of this now.]

Her lips parted to answer me, a smile was beginning to gather in the dimples of her cheeks, when a strange thing

happened. The colour suddenly flew from her face, leaving it white as the pallid Duc upon the carpet, and into her lovely eyes rushed an expression of terror that after all these years haunts me still.

Quickly following their frozen glance I turned my head, and there, seen for an instant through the oriel window, I beheld the face of—the Duc Raoul Saint Cristophe de la Mangerie-Rôchvallénciène!

[By this neat trick attention is diverted from the mysterious entry of the lady—which might be difficult to explain without some constructive care; and if you waste time on this you may miss your market.

We will now suppose that our readers have been hurried through seventeen or eighteen similar episodes; that the lady is still partly wrapped in obscurity, though her name is discovered to be Antoinette Enaspic de Cotolette, and herself the high-spirited representative of a rival and much-injured house; that the mystery of the two Ducs has merely thickened; that a wicked Archbishop and a designing Count have appeared on the scene; and finally that our hero has come to Paris for reasons which have been evaded by a similar device to that described above. Let us now assume we are at chapter 20, and let us do the Earl's-Court-Exhibition - old - Paris - street-scene so popular with devourers of these romances.]

The landlord conducted me up stairs interminable and along corridors damp as vaults, where

the arras rustled stealthily as we passed and the bats flitted noiselessly through the radiance of our lantern, till at length he paused before a door high up in this labyrinth of a hostelry and turned a ponderous key. I looked over his shoulder in time to catch a glimpse of two gigantic rats scampering across an uncarpeted floor.

"Monsieur will find company," he said with his mocking leer.

"The company will find monsieur," I retorted with as cheerful an air as I could muster.

The fellow grinned at the jest [a fair sixteenth-century sample], and withdrew. I was alone at last!

Rapidly I cast my eyes round the room to make sure that I was unobserved, and then drew from my wallet the precious packet. The seal was still unbroken!

I smiled with renewed satisfaction and approached the window.

The stars were twinkling peacefully over Paris, as though they twinkled upon a Paradise instead of this huge cesspool of passion and hate. Far down below I looked upon a dark pavement and gleaming gutters, where the passing watchman with his cry of "*Vive la France encore, mon ami!*" and the muttered countersign, "*Ma père, mon mère!*" alone broke the deathly silence.

Right opposite I saw a jumble of peaked gables, latticed windows, and timbered fronts, and about half-way down the perpendicular wall of darkness confronting me I

could just perceive a glimmer of light escaping from a narrow loophole.

It was my only chance.

Carefully measuring the distance with my eye and finding that it was only 52 kilometres 8 ells [this has a fine Franco-archaic sound; what it is in miles I cannot tell you, but no one will stop to inquire at this exciting juncture], I commended my soul to Saint Julienne de Potage and leapt into the dizzy void.

Unfortunately I had miscalculated the distance. Instead of 52 kilometres it should have been 152! Round and round I spun in the cold midnight air till I had lost all count of my revolutions. I told my beads more hurriedly than I care to confess, and then stretched out my hand at a venture. What exactly happened I can scarcely describe; I only know that I caught a glimpse of the lighted loophole, grasped the projecting iron bar as I shot past, and with an almost superhuman effort seated myself astride the sill.

[After this feat our hero may with advantage witness a murder through the aforesaid loophole, fight a single combat with the murderer, bury the victim with a spade and a dark lantern, and in the act of doing this make the acquaintance of some popular historical character, such as Richelieu, Talleyrand, Henry the Fourth, or a Bourbon. He then rescues the heroine from a coffin where she has been laid while drugged, confounds the machinations of the wicked archbishop, and all ends happily somewhat as follows.]

"I leave the decision in the fair hands of Mademoiselle Antoinette," said his Majesty with a courteous inclination.

I looked toward her, and my heart stood still. My fate was sealed indeed; her coolness for the last two days could have but one explanation. She had resolved to have my life.

I removed my breastplate and cried—

"Strike, mademoiselle! A Mangerie-Rôchvallénciène knows how to die!"

To my astonishment her beautiful eyes filled with tears.

"Anatole!" she exclaimed,

stretching out her arms, "quelle rôti aujourd'hui!"

"Mademoiselle has decided," smiled the king. "Kneel down, monsieur; I have a *souçon* else for you."

A moment later I rose with a cardinal's hat upon my head and the Countess Antoinette upon my arm.

You see now how it is done. Nothing can be simpler, and few things more likely to be substantially appreciated.—Your affectionate and well-intentioned
UNCLE.

III.

MY DEAR NEPHEW,—The illustration I am now going to give you is an example of what may be styled the North British Melodramatic Idyll, one of the most popular brands at present in the market. The principal points to attend to in the construction of these remunerative epics are as follows.

In the first place, you must understand that the North Britons possessed at one time a language of their own as distinctively national as their marmalade, and fragments of this, together with certain phrases from the Venerable Bede, the Bible, and Mr R. L. Stevenson (such as whither-soever, whereby, and peradventure), have been skilfully blended to form what is technically known in the hardy North as "a' oo' blethers." A few moments must certainly be employed in mastering this.

Secondly, it is highly advisable that the tale be put into the mouth of one of your fictitious characters, lest your friends should really suppose that this patois is the habitual outlet for your feelings.

Then a certain strain of sentiment must be caught. It is hard to exactly define this, but perhaps I can most nearly describe it by asking you to conceive the simplicity of an Oxford freshman united to the uncontrollable emotions of a Salvation Army captain, and illuminated by flashes of intelligence at about the intervals at which they occur in a senile alcoholic patient. Place a hero thus equipped in a quagmire of hazardous adventures, give him the devil's own luck in getting out of them, and you can easily see that four-and-sixpence will not be too great a price to put upon his experiences.

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is being carried by Andra Sneckett and Cristie Mackay towards the Kye Trough in Thrums Lane.

At this point I shall leave you to finish the epic as you think best. The only two essential points are these: You must not leave too many characters surviving at the fall of the curtain, or you will have a blood-fed public demanding back their four-and-sixpences; and you must appropriately reward your hero for his exertions by legally uniting him to that exuberant product of amorous innocence, Miss Buttercup of Auchterfechan. — Your affectionate and well-intentioned

UNCLE.

(To be continued.)

"'Twill make a sonsy lass into a flint-hearted woman," I retorted, with a strangled uprush of tears that eftsoon bechoked my utterance.

With mischancy divination I saw her in my mind's eye as I was after to see her in the flesh, enclasped by the black arms of Bloodyaxe 'neath the pitying twinkle of the stars.

"Ye neep-heided gomerall!" she scoffed. "A man like you to greet! Think shame to yourself!"

Yet her look was kinder than her keen-edged wit, and suddenly, ere I had time to catch my breath, she had kissed me roundly on the neb.

"Tammaas, lad," she cried, "am I no' nicer than haggis after a'?"

"Whiles," I replied, pressing her snowy bosom 'gainst my homespun jerkin.

[This delicate morsel of poetry having been digested, and found not to lie too heavy on the "stammick," we shall now suppose our readers carried breathlessly through the assassination of Grey Jock by his hereditary rival Muckledowp of Middenbraes, through the moonlight landing of the Clan Collop on the shores of Cookypen, and through the fifteen or sixteen murders, hamesuckens, robberies, and abductions to which this untoward event gives rise. Our hero, who has hitherto borne a blameless character in the ministry, becomes involved in an attempt to fire the Kirk by the horrid yet ingenious device of steeping the elders in paraffin and grouping them

round the stove. This occurs through no fault of his own, but merely as a natural consequence of the disposition and acquirements indicated at the beginning of this letter. However, just as one thing leads to another in kindred fields of life (such as the nursery and the asylum), so the joys of arson lead our arohaic *raconteur* to consecrate himself to a life of gore. A magnificent opportunity for Turkish-bathing in undiluted pathos is afforded by his farewell to the survivors of his congregation and the cinders of his elders. Thus:—]

For the last time I ascended the steps of the pulpit, whence Sabbath after Sabbath, through hirpling May and wowf November, I had striven as well as a man might to daunt the faithful and controvert the heresies of the schismatics. For we were sore troubled with the Free Kirk in Auchterfechan. The effects of my thoughtless violence were still to be seen in the roofless vestry and charred precentor, but of these manifestations I took but little heed at that moment. An I had possessed a belly stiff enough to face the moved countenances of my flock [note the forcible vulgarity of this phrase; it is one of the hallmarks of the N.B. epic], then peradventure I should have spied salt tears in eyes that never grat before, but my heart was too full to jalouse them.

"My poor friends and brethren," I began—and you could have heard a bawbee drop for very silence when I oped my

lips,—“you are going to be bereft of me! Would that I might continue to sustain, fructify, and inspire you, but, my friends, it is not to be. A higher calling awaits me, a louder voice booms in my lug. I have tasted the joys of brandishing claymores on the moorlands, of enthusiastically loving hoydenish maids, of burying mine enemies by the half hundred, of swimming the waterfall and leaping the precipitous ravine, and nothing more is needed to convince me that herein lies my duty. Yet I shall aye think of you kindly, and hope to meet the best among you hereafter.”

At these words my voice failed me, my mind clouded, and all I can now remember

is being carried by Andra Sneckett and Cristie Mackay towards the Kye Trough in Thrums Lane.

At this point I shall leave you to finish the epic as you think best. The only two essential points are these: You must not leave too many characters surviving at the fall of the curtain, or you will have a blood-fed public demanding back their four-and-sixpences; and you must appropriately reward your hero for his exertions by legally uniting him to that exuberant product of amorous innocence, Miss Buttercup of Auchterfechan. — Your affectionate and well-intentioned

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(To be continued.)

Ann climbed from the shelf, his words suddenly cutting her.

"Yes," she said, holding her head up, "you can go, go now, before it is too late."

"May I ask why?"

"Because they will kill you; Aaron Neck will kill you before morning. You are Mr Thirl? Do you not know they have no fancy for your coming on the island? Everyone there and some here have reasons for keeping you away; it will not be Aaron's fault if you get there alive."

Thirl did not move. "Your pardon," he said, "but to whom have I the honour of speaking?"

"Ann Ponsford," she answered, "nobody, less than nobody, for half the name is not mine by law."

Thirl looked keenly at her. "Why have you troubled to warn me?" he asked. "I am nothing to you."

"No," she admitted, "but I hate Aaron Neck;" and her voice, low and steady but with the whisper of indrawn breath, told Thirl that she spoke truly.

"You would save me to hurt him?—I believe you would save the devil for that!"

She did not say yes nor no, but her teeth gleamed white over her lip.

"What am I to do?" he inquired. "Saddle my horse and ride away?—the roads are deep in snow, and I know nothing of the country. Thank you; but it suits better with my inclination to stay here and face it out."

But Ann knew of how little avail that would be. "The

door is fastened outside," she said, and he striding across the room to try it found she was right,—it had been fastened noiselessly while he read.

"Aaron will come by way of the trap," she went on, pointing upwards to a trap-door in the ceiling. "If you sleep, he will drop down and do it quietly; if you wake, he will look through and shoot you. The trap gives on to the flat roof which is at the back part of the house—one can get to it easily from the window that looks out from the upper thatch. Aaron is more agile than any would think when mischief is afoot. You must get out through the trap,—the fastening is broken, so you can open it,—and you must do it soon, for Aaron will come towards three in the morning."

Thirl nodded; he began to see that the position might be somewhat desperate. "And when I am outside?" he asked. "I tell you plainly that I have no mind to give up the Old Hall for all the rascals in the kingdom."

"I have no mind either," she said; "it would suit Aaron almost as well to have you gone as to have you dead. You must go to Old Hall, and you must go to-night. The tide is still too high, so there is no crossing by the causeway; but I will row you over to the island. Oh yes, the night is dark, I know, and thick with snow; but I have been out in the dark before, and I know the channels as well as the Marshmen. If you trust me, I will take you across."

them to be. She moved quietly, so they hardly heeded her nearness; and though at first she did not listen to what they said, soon the words caught her ear. They were speaking of the stranger it seemed, Aaron asking them who they thought honoured his roof that night. When they could not guess he said, "Draycott Thirl, Esquire, gent., of London—and Old Hall—if he lives till to-morrow's light and makes the passage to the island to take possession." And Aaron laughed a low fat laugh that boded no good to some one.

But the Marshmen did not laugh, for this Thirl who was going to the Old Hall was likely to be no friend to them. The Squire who was before him at the Hall had been their friend: he had asked no questions about their doings, stood in with them more times than one, and made no outcry if the good French wine in his cellars did not pay duty to the king. But the old Squire was dead: he had died drunk, as he had mostly lived, and bankrupt too. Of this Thirl who was to come after little was known for fact, though something for rumour. It was said he had gotten the place by usury. It was thought he had interest in the revenue; but it was known, at least to Aaron Neck, who had looked at him, that he was not one to wink and pass by unless he was so minded. Thus it was that, when mine host gave the name of his guest, the Marshmen swore: all the island, as well as some on the

coast, were anxious that the right man—or better still, no man—should have the Old Hall.

"He has come to take possession," Aaron went on to say. "He did not tell me: he is not a genial man, nor one to take a poor innkeeper into his confidence; still, this one knows both him and his business. He found our roads mighty bad,—he did tell me that: his servant floundered into a snow-drift somewhere near the town, and had to put up with the baggage and hurts, but Mr Thirl pushed on. It would not suit his book to stay in the neighbourhood till his whereabouts got abroad, would it, John? He's got so far in safety—ten miles of very bad road—it's the devil's own mischief that the tide is up, and there's no getting to the island by the causeway when the tide is not at the lowest. You'n I could not cross that way in the snow till to-morrow morning—could we, John?"

John said "No," and laughed suddenly.

"A stranger from London couldn't do it—could he, John?" Aaron asked sleekly.

And again John laughed. "No, by God!" he said.

"Mr Thirl did not go down the river shore and take the ferry," Aaron went on to say. "I'm glad he didn't; 'tisn't often such customers come to this house. But the men down there'd been pleased to see him—if they'd known his name, and they're good at guessing names. They'd been so pleased

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But Ann knew of how little avail that would be. "The

door is fastened outside," she said, and he striding across the room to try it found she was right,—it had been fastened noiselessly while he read.

"Aaron will come by way of the trap," she went on, pointing upwards to a trap-door in the ceiling. "If you sleep, he will drop down and do it quietly; if you wake, he will look through and shoot you. The trap gives on to the flat roof which is at the back part of the house—one can get to it easily from the window that looks out from the upper thatch. Aaron is more agile than any would think when mischief is afoot. You must get out through the trap,—the fastening is broken, so you can open it,—and you must do it soon, for Aaron will come towards three in the morning."

Thirl nodded; he began to see that the position might be somewhat desperate. "And when I am outside?" he asked. "I tell you plainly that I have no mind to give up the Old Hall for all the rascals in the kingdom."

"I have no mind either," she said; "it would suit Aaron almost as well to have you gone as to have you dead. You must go to Old Hall, and you must go to-night. The tide is still too high, so there is no crossing by the causeway; but I will row you over to the island. Oh yes, the night is dark, I know, and thick with snow; but I have been out in the dark before, and I know the channels as well as the Marshmen. If you trust me, I will take you across."

He shrugged his shoulders. "I must trust you," he said.

She glanced at his coat, which still lay on a chair. He picked it up, and with an apology put it on. Ann turned away, the colour coming under the clear darkness of her skin; the apology—the mere courtesy of a gentleman—brought it.

She deadened the fire till it was low and smouldering, extinguished the candles, and then stood the biggest chair in the room on the foot of the bed. By this time Thirl was ready, and she held the chair firmly while he mounted on it, reached up, and opened the trap. A few snowflakes fluttered in. Ann felt them, then they ceased: Thirl had filled the aperture with his body, placing his hands on either side of the frozen roofing, and so drawing himself up through the hole. Then he leaned down and pulled her after him. Outside the snow was falling as fast as ever; the roof was covered deep, but they felt their way along, and so came to the edge.

"It is not so very high from the ground here," Ann said, speaking low, for fear there should be any one behind the dormer window that looked darkly down. "There are bushes below, close growing and matted by the wind; they are covered thick with snow,—one might drop into them without getting much hurt." As she spoke she slid over the edge and out of sight.

For a moment Thirl paused half doubtful, then he followed,

and landing in the deep snow-drift found his faith justified, for there was no ambush, only his guide waiting for him. Silently she led him across the garden and down a field, the snow deadening their steps and muffling all the sounds in the air. They could not go fast, for the drifts lay deep by the hedge; but at last they came to the water's edge. In the darkness he would have stepped in had she not stopped him.

"Stand still," she said; "I will get the boat."

He stood, a figure of white lost in the white falling cloud, and listened to the woolly silence. Soon, however, she had the boat ready, and he got in as she ordered. He would have taken an oar, but she said, "No, there is no wind; I can manage better alone, for I know the tide and the currents. In this darkness I must go partly by feeling."

So he sat still while she rowed slowly: he felt the boat throb under the steady strokes; he even felt the pull of the current and tide, and the little eddies setting this way and that by which she steered her course. Out on to the black water they crept in a strange sleeping world where the great dark was very close, and it seemed as if it were the Boat of Souls that felt its silent way down the River of Death.

Softly the boat's nose grounded on the mud bottom. "We are aground," Ann said. "I have mistaken the place, and gone too high up the shore; we must get off again." She

came to the other end of the boat, and putting the weight together, pushed off quickly, for the tide was falling fast, and every minute was important. He would have helped her, but she bade him keep still.

"We must be quiet," she said, "sounds carry so far on the water."

So in silence they went, this way and that, he did not know where—to him it was like drifting on an icy sea of dreams. On and on, until once again the boat stopped.

"This is the old landing-stage," Ann said, and he felt her lean over to make the boat fast.

He stepped out into the shallow water that felt warmer than the air. She led him to the shore, and from thence to a narrow lane where the drifts were beyond their knees.

"You have the key?" she asked, as they floundered, and he said "Yes."

Now the Old Hall stood close to the shore. On one side a waterway approached right up to it, but Ann had not chosen that way, for it was hard to strike on such a night; moreover, she was not at all sure of being able to make an entry there. So she came ashore at the old landing-stage, found her way by the narrow lane, under the snow-laden trees, to the chief door. Of this Thirl had the key, though it took time to undo, for the autumn damps had rusted the lock, and his hands were numbed with the cold. At last he had it open, and they went in together.

"There is another way into this house," Ann said, and in the dark he heard her feeling, as if for something she knew where to find. Soon he saw what it was, for she kindled a light, and set fire to a candle that lay on an oaken bench near the fireplace.

"You seem to know something of the ways of my house," he said.

"Several do," she answered; "that is why I shall show you the other way in: you must make it fast, and take care, or you will have other visitors than you bargain for."

She led the way down the wide hall, down a passage beyond, coming to what he judged to be the kitchen parts. He looked about him as he went; but there was no sign of life, except when their shadows came out of the panelling, to be swallowed again by the darkness when the light passed. At last Ann paused by a heavy door.

"Down here," she said, and opened it, showing stone steps which went downwards.

The air was clammy and damp, smelling strongly of the marsh; but the candle burned steadily, and Thirl followed her down to the old Squire's cellars. For the most part they were empty now, or if there was anything left in them Ann gave the new owner no time to look, leading from one to another, until she came at last to a little low one tucked under the seaward edge of the house. Here she stopped, and lifting the light, showed him an archway in the masonry of

the wall. The brickwork was old—little, long bricks, such as the Romans made, welded by time till they were close as stone. Set in the arch was a stout wooden door with never a bolt across it.

"See," she said, "it opens straight on to the great dyke that runs out to sea: a boat can get up at almost any tide. It is the handiest backdoor that ever man had. There were bolts"—she lowered the light that he might see the place where they had been—"but the Marshmen took them off when the old Squire died. It looks; but it is not you nor I who have the key which fits it now."

Thirl nodded: it was clear why the Marshmen were not anxious that one should come to the Hall,—the cellar with the backdoor would be useful to them. "Is there ice in the dyke?" he asked.

"Cat ice," Ann answered; "a boat could get through, unless the snow ceases and frost sets in sharply. But it is not likely any one will come to-night. The person most ready to take a boat over on such a night has already gone, and the stranger, who knew the place so ill that he ventured to be her passenger, with her." And she laughed a little at the thought of Aaron's rage when he found her gone. "Now I will go," she said. "You will find something of food and firing in the house; the Marshmen brought it here in case of need. You must take what you want and hold what you've got—if you can."

He stood irresolute by the door of the cellar. "Where will you go?" he asked.

"Back," she answered.

"You have been a long time gone; they will have missed you,—they will suspect."

"They will give me the warmer welcome."

In the candle-light her face was fine in its defiance: Thirl could not but note it.

"If," he said, "Aaron Neck would kill me for coming to the Old Hall, what would he do to you for bringing me here?"

She shrugged her shoulders. "I would as lief die one way as another," she answered.

But Thirl said decidedly, "You will not leave this house to-night unless you can give me your word you have some place to go to."

"I have no place and no people. My father was such as you are, and my mother disgraced by his distinction, so I have no kin. Martha Neck's charity gave me home and work when I was little, and Aaron Neck gives it me now that I can do woman's work, and man's work too, for no wages."

"Then you will stay here," so Thirl said. "You have cast in your lot, and you must abide by it for the present."

Ann looked at the bricked archway. "It will take time to make that way secure," she said thoughtfully. "Two would be better than one—two could hold this house till help came. Where is your servant?"

"At an inn near the town: it may be some days before he can travel."

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"At an inn near the town: it may be some days before he can travel."

She considered a moment, then, "I will stay till help comes," she said.

"You will stay till I can dispose of you safely," he answered.

Then they fell to work, and having gulled the lock with wood splinters, set to piling old timbers and rubbish, whatever they could lay hands upon, against the door. It took time, but they worked with a will, silently, yet with a co-operation not always to be found among talkers.

When they had stacked all they could find Ann said, "Now we will get the casks in. There are great casks, for the most part empty, in the cellars we have passed: we will get them

in and set them close up against the wall. Casks set up close together are ill things to shift, and noisy too; we should hear if any touched them. We will fill this little cellar: there are plenty, and I know how to move them."

Here Thirl found she spoke no more than the truth: she shifted them with the ease of one who had helped at the unloading of more than one cargo. Separately they rolled them in, packing them till the low cellar was wellnigh filled. Then, when the last was in and all as secure as they could make it, they came out together, and Thirl locked the door with hands that bled from the unwonted work.

II. THE COMING OF TOBIAH THE DISSENTER.

Before Martha Neck died she bequeathed, as has been said, the dower-chest of tulip-wood to Tobiah the Dissenter. It was not likely that it would be of much use to him, but it was the only thing of value she possessed, and he was the only person, besides Ann Ponsford, who had been of comfort to her in her declining years. She could not leave the chest to Ann, for that, she felt, would be giving it into Aaron's hands under another name. She had no daughter to take it, and for Sacrisa Viney, her son's wife, she had no fancy. So to Tobiah, who had at least given her ghostly comfort, she left it.

That was before Michaelmas; but though it was now after the first snow, Tobiah had not

yet got it. He had spoken to Aaron about it after a decent interval, and Aaron had said that he would himself bring it to the town when he came with his cart for supplies. But when Aaron came he did not bring it, but went instead to Tobiah's house and explained that it was the fault of the rascally joiner who was still at work fitting a hinge. Tobiah thanked Aaron for his trouble, and said he would send to fetch the dower-chest himself.

This Aaron would not have: he was coming to town again soon, and would bring it then. But he did not come, for the rain set in and the roads were heavy beyond belief; indeed, that autumn was the wettest in memory. So time went on,

and the chest did not come : for one reason or another it was always coming but never arriving. A friend of Tobiah's came past the Black Horse once, but it was found that his cart was too small to take it. A friend of Aaron's came by, but it was during the frost when the men were all out after wild-duck and there was no one to lift it, so it still remained in the guest-room.

But on the very night when Ann found a use for it Tobiah himself came. He had been visiting for purposes of exhortation several backsliders who lived between the town and the coast. This had taken him two days, for the snow had set in and impeded his going. It was late when he reached the Black Horse ; Ann had long gone upstairs, and so knew nothing of his arrival.

It is possible Aaron was as little pleased to see Tobiah that night as any man, except perhaps an excise officer. Nevertheless he made himself pleasant, for he had always remembered to act as an amiable and somewhat religious man before the Dissenter. It was clearly impossible that one should be turned from the door that night, so Aaron put a good face on it and made the uninvited guest welcome. He told him that he was grieved to say he had no bed to spare. "But," said he, "if you will be content to lie by the kitchen fire, why, you are more than welcome to it."

"Nay, brother," Tobiah answered, "I want nothing better. I am a mighty sleeper. A good conscience and hard

walking in this weather would make the chimney itself a bed of down. I shall sleep well here, with God's blessing."

Aaron devoutly hoped he might, for he had business of his own that night which would not be the better for Tobiah's handling. However, as luck would have it, Tobiah was roused before morning, and that by a most mighty outbreak of swearing. For a little he lay in the dark listening, not yet awake and half convinced that he must be dreaming. But soon he was assured that he was awake, and that his ears were indeed being assailed with vile profanity which, coming from an ignorant man without imagination, was but of a poor and low order.

Tobiah drew on his boots hastily, and without waiting to take off the conical red night-cap which he carried with him in the cold weather, started to see what the noise might mean.

"Hey, brother!" he shouted before he reached the kitchen door, "what is this ungodly confusion, and why this villainous and profane riot in a Christian house?"

The swearing had to an extent ceased, but he could hear voices in talk, so he got the door open and came out to see. Without, in the passageway, he saw Aaron Neck and old John. John was white with snow, as if he had but lately come in, and Aaron, though the hour was after three in the morning, was fully dressed as he had been last night.

"What's the to-do?" Tobiah demanded, and old John, mut-

tering savagely, turned away like one who could not answer. But Aaron was more equal to the occasion.

"To-do enough," he said to Tobiah, but with his little swine's eyes on John. "A villain came to my house last night; I gave him my best, bed and board, and now, now he has gone."

Tobiah clucked with his tongue. "Has he taken ought with him?" he asked.

"Ay, that he has," Aaron answered; "he has carried off a wench, as fine and strong a woman as one need want to see. Carried her off against her will, to what evil purpose the devil only knows."

"Ann Ponsford?" asked Tobiah, who knew something of her. "Is it she? Then, good brother, mark my word, it is with her will that she has gone and not against it,—the devil himself could not easily take her against it."

"With it or against it," Aaron replied; "it is all one to me. She has gone, he has seduced her, she is gone with him, and I am responsible before the Lord. She was as a daughter to me"—so he went on, with almost a sob in his sleek voice.

Old John must have been moved too, for he cleared his throat noisily, though some might have said the sound was as near laughter as crying. But with Aaron there could be no mistake, and Tobiah made none. "We must get her back," he said; "she can't have gone far—we will catch up with them soon. They cannot have

started long if the noise of their going woke you."

"It did not," Aaron answered; "a feeling woke me, a strange uneasy feeling as of something wrong, a warning from on High it must have been, but I disregarded it until too late. I told myself there was nothing amiss, and lay as long as I could; but at last I was obliged to get up and see, and then it was too late—they were gone."

"But they cannot have gone far," Tobiah persisted. Though he was a great believer in help from on High, he also believed in man taking a hand in the business toward. "On such a night as this where could they have gone? how could they escape by the roads?"

"They have escaped by the water," John growled. "They have gone over to the island, and are, without doubt, snug and warm in the Old Hall, which house he has gotten by usury—bad luck to him!"

"By the water!" Tobiah cried. "So much the better; we can take to the water too."

"Not to-night," John said. "It is dark as pitch and full of snow; there is no one but Ann Ponsford would venture to cross to-night, and few who knew the channel would venture with her. Moreover, though we have reason enough for wanting the man, it is one thing to tackle him here and another to beard him in his own house. I'm not over good at law, but I know better than to break into a man's house, and that a gentleman's. No. He's got there; he must stop there for

the present, though I'm not for saying there mayn't be an accident some day in the open or on the water——"

A part of this was as Greek to Tobiah, who knew of no reason for wanting Thirl except the one that he had borne off Ann Ponsford, and certainly no reason why he should not be followed to his own house and forced to surrender her there as well as in another place. He said so with some plainness, and Aaron, knowing his man and fearing complications, cut in—"We must leave it in the hands of the Lord for the night; we cannot cross till daylight."

Tobiah agreed; he could do nothing else, for these men knew the place and its dangers better than he. "I will come with you to-morrow," he said; "the Lord has sometimes given me victories over the Devil,—it is possible I may prevail. Come within by the fire, and tell me about this son of Belial, so that I may be prepared for the attack."

Aaron sent old John off to bed, then came and sat down by the kitchen fire. Tobiah sat opposite, his red night-cap still on his head, asking questions, not only as to Thirl but also as to the Old Hall and the way it could best be reached. As he spoke, Aaron began to see that the Dissenter might serve him better than the Marshmen. It is true he could likely rouse them to attack Thirl even in his own house, though, as old John said, at present they had little stomach for it. But in the matter of Ann Ponsford they were not to be relied on;

she was a woman, and they would not touch her. Moreover, there were some that said he had used her ill, and so deserved ill at her hands. Thirl might meet with Fate by-and-by, but Ann would not unless he stirred, and it was with Ann he most wished to settle. He smiled the slow smile that scarcely wrinkled his big white face as he thought how he would settle, and how well Tobiah might serve as a decoy. The good man was so zealous in the cause of righteousness, he would take her away by force if need be from him whom he deemed her betrayer. So thinking, Aaron led the talk this way and that: very pious and grieved was he, seldom looking at Tobiah, and only towards morning leaning forward to touch his knee.

"Save Ann Ponsford for me," he said, "and you shall take the dower-chest back with you: you shall take it in my new cart and with the brown oob to draw it, no matter how the roads may be."

"I am obliged to you, brother," Tobiah answered, "but I should do justice without that kindness, the Lord helping me. Now let us to sleep a while; the night is nearly spent, and it were as well to start fresh to such an enterprise."

So to sleep Tobiah went, and to breakfast in the morning before it was light.

As soon as ever it was judged wise, Tobiah and Aaron set out with John to row them to the island. The tide had fallen considerably, so that it was possible to cross by way of the

causeway which joined the island to the mainland. But it was deemed better not to go that way, for it landed one some distance from the Old Hall, and the roads were so blocked with snow as to be but bad going. So the three rowed over, as Ann and Draycott Thirl had done before them.

They crossed the strip of sea, heading for the deep channel which ran through the marsh, now left bare by the tide. This channel brought them straight to the landing-stage had they followed it right up; but they did not,—they turned into a narrow water-way which bore off to the right and joined the great dyke that ran out to sea close to the Old Hall. Up this they went, forcing their way through the cat ice, intending to try the backdoor, although Aaron did not expect to effect an entrance there. He was not disappointed when he found Ann had prepared for their coming and made that way secure.

"We must go to the front of the house," Tobiah said. "I will demand admittance, and also reason with the young woman."

Old John rapped out an oath (for which Tobiah reproved him). "Sooner you than me for the front of the house," said he.

The snow had ceased by this time, so that against the whiteness of the country a man was a good mark, and Ann, as the old man knew, was a dead shot. It was likely, too, that Thirl could handle arms.

"Tut!" Tobiah answered.

"Why should they shoot? They will not attack us more than we them. We are not cannibal savages, either the one or the other of us. We do not come to harm—only to reason forcibly for righteousness."

John muttered something, growling; but Aaron said smoothly, "That is quite true, friend Tobiah, and it were well that it should be you to say it. You are the man best fitted to reason with Ann on account of your godly life and the great power of your arguments. We will wait among the trees, but go you to the house front."

This plan exactly pleased Tobiah, for if the good man had a weakness it was just an inclination to play not only the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer himself, but also all the other instruments of music. Accordingly, when they reached the landing-stage, he hopped ashore in haste and ploughed his way up the lane, taking such great strides in spite of the deep snow that Aaron found it quite easy to follow. Old John did not come. "I'm going home," he said; "you can take the boat back yourselves," and he turned off by the sea-wall.

Aaron did not seem vexed by this, and Tobiah hardly noticed it. He was already well on his way up the lane. The gate of the Old Hall they could not open; it was blocked with a drift full six feet deep, but Tobiah floundered through and climbed over, then took his way up the drive and came to the

house front. Here Aaron fell away from him, sneaking off among the trees, and there waiting out of ear-shot of what passed by the house front.

Those within the house were not altogether unprepared for some one's coming, though not certain that any would come. Ann knew that the Marshmen would hardly of themselves venture to lawlessly break into a house; but she also knew that Aaron was able to urge them to it, and might well do so in his rage. Accordingly she warned Thirl to be prepared. This much earlier, about the time when they finished their work in the cellar.

He stretched his tired arms and said, "They will not come while it is dark, I suppose?"

"No," she answered, and suddenly remembering the hours that lay before the tardy winter's dawn, felt awkward and at odds.

Thirl did not seem to notice it. "So much the better," he said; "you can rest a while, —you must need it. I hope the Marshmen have been so good as to leave enough of the old Squire's things to make you tolerably comfortable."

"I don't know," she answered. "I know nothing of the house except the hall and cellar."

"Nor I," he said. "Let us explore."

And, taking the candle from her, he led the way up the dark stairs into a wide gallery above. Here, where their steps echoed loudly, closed doors shut in large rooms, and passages led away into darkness. Thirl tried a door and found it fastened;

another, and found the room behind it dismantled. Then he started down a passage.

"Let us see where this goes," he said.

The way widened as they went, turned a little, descended two steps, ascended three, then, when they had come to the far part of the house, broadened into a wide place with three doors opening from it. Thirl opened the first, and, holding the light high, looked in at the dark wainscot, the curtained bed, and shuttered windows.

"The accommodation is poor," he said; "can you make shift here for an hour or two?"

He handed her what was left of the candle as he spoke. She took it, and not till after the door was closed remembered that he had no light. She turned quickly, thinking to call after him; then she changed her mind, and stood listening to the sound of his retreating steps and the clank of the sword he wore. At last even that sound ceased, and silence, unbroken by so much as the scamper of rats or the creak of timbers, fell on the house again.

Ann slept for several hours, but awoke before dawn, not so very much after the time she usually rose to set about her household work. She got up now, and before long found her way back to the chief stairs and so to the hall and kitchen. Here she opened the shutters and let in the blue glimmer of the snow, which had ceased to fall, but lay smooth and white over everything. She looked out a moment, then

went to the cellar and fetched some of the dry wood and turf stored there, and set about kindling a fire. She was still busy with it when she heard a step behind her, and looking round she made out Thirl in the lessening gloom.

"Permit me," he said; and taking the wood from her hands, he kindled the fire himself, as one who has the best right.

Ann hesitated a moment, then yielded her place, and went to fetch the smoked bacon and ship's biscuits which had been stored away by the smugglers for the use of one who had been forced to lie hid for a little. She set them on the table, with such cups and plates as she could find. Or rather, she would have done so, only Thirl, who now had the fire blazing merrily, took them from her, and placing a chair before the hearth, asked her to be seated.

"Why do you not let me serve you?" she asked; "I am a servant."

"Not here," he answered, and she lowered her eyes: it was true, she was his guest—the guest of a man not yet forty, and of a station far other than her own.

"We are companions in misfortune," he said; "but it is always the man's right to serve."

She sat down, but with her back half turned to him.

"May I offer you some of the Marshmen's ham?" he asked; "it looks excellent."

She turned about. "It is from Aaron's pig," she said,

for the sake of saying something. "I cured it myself."

"That is a guarantee," he said, cutting away.

"I am not so sure," she answered; "I have no taste for pickling—I only do it from sheer necessity." Then something prompted her to follow his lead, and, "May I pour you a cup of pump-water?" she said; "that too looks excellent."

"It should be," he returned; "it is from my own pump."

After they had finished their meal they cleared away the things, talking the while, not now of the chances of attack but of the little book which had bulged Thirl's pocket. It was the play of "Julius Cæsar," which, it seemed, Ann knew as well as he—for the curate of the parish had given her some education. This in the days when Aaron, and so perforce his wife, were good church people. It seemed she had more taste for books than pickling hams, although the ham was good enough of its kind.

When they had put everything in place again, Thirl proposed that they should look over the house and see if it had other backdoors of convenience. But they had no more than reached the hall when a hail from without brought them to a halt.

"It seems the Marshmen are here already," Thirl said.

"Yes," Ann answered, "but in the front: it is strange they should come to the front and call."

Thirl agreed, but said, "It is at least civil of them to

make themselves known. I will go and hear what they have to say.

He went upstairs to a room at the extreme end of the house front. This room had a window that looked on the side as well as one in the front; but he did not spare a glance for the side. Ann, however, who had her doubts as to the reason of the outcry in front, went to another room near by and looked out among the trees. At first she saw no one: the trees were thick, and so snow-laden that it was hard to see among them. But her eyes were keen, and after a little she caught sight of something that moved, and more by its movements than its shape she made out that it was Aaron Neck. As soon as she was sure of this she went to warn Thirl to be careful how he entered into negotiations with those in front.

He, in the meantime, had looked out and seen Tobiah standing in the snow. Being a stranger in the place, he did not know Tobiah from Adam (except for the difference of dress), and so had no idea of the man's moral standing, and took him to be as big a rascal as the Marshmen.

"Ho! Sinners within!" Tobiah halloed. "Son of Belial and thankless daughter of deceit, I would speak with you!"

Thirl opened the window a little way. "You can speak with me," he said.

Tobiah saw him. "You are there, are you?" he cried. "Well, then, listen to me, and

at once bring forth the woman."

"The woman?" Thirl said, clearly amazed.

"Yes, the woman," Tobiah answered—"the woman you have with you in the house. Yield her up, I say, and that immediately!"

"For what?" Thirl asked.

"That I may take her to Aaron Neck. The Lord—and, peradventure, a servant of His—will deal with you, but Aaron will deal with this erring daughter."

"I will see him damned first!" so Thirl answered, and closed the window.

Tobiah snorted angrily at the closing of the window, which did not, however, prevent his speech,—only led him to shout the louder. "See him damned you certainly will," he called, "if such a fate could befall a good man; for you will be there, you will most certainly be there."

Thirl made no answer, but stood looking at Tobiah, who, for warmth, wore his night-cap under his flapping hat, so that the crimson rim showed above his ears.

"Do you defy me?" Tobiah asked. "It is against the law! It is abduction to carry a young woman off and hold her from her friends! How long do you think you will hold her in defiance of God and the law?"

"As long as I choose."

"No, you will not! By—by all the wicked oaths that wicked men swear, you will not! She will return with me, and that soon, to Aaron Neck!"

"She will do no such thing. I will marry her first!"

"Marry her?" Tobiah stopped suddenly: he had started to plunge through the snow towards the door. "If you marry her, that puts another complexion on the matter."

It was at that moment that Ann came into the room, and so heard Tobiah's voice, which was like none other.

"Tobiah the Dissenter!" she exclaimed, looking out of the window. "What is he here for?"

Tobiah saw her. "Frail daughter of frailty," he said, "I have come to take you home to Aaron Neck and a godly life."

"She will not go," Thirl said curtly, his hand on the window that Ann had opened.

"Then you will marry her," Tobiah retorted. "He says he will marry you sooner than let you go: he will do one or the other."

Ann turned upon Thirl with anger in her eyes. "You had best beware what you are saying," she said, "at least to that man."

"It is not my custom to say more than I am ready to do," Thirl answered.

Tobiah could see they spoke to one another, though he could not hear what passed. "Let me into the house," he said.

Ann stooped to the opening of the window. "What are you doing in this affair?" she asked; "it is not yours."

"It is the Lord's," he answered; "I have His commission."

"Has Aaron Neck His commission to lurk in the trees and level his gun at a window, when the flapping of a curtain makes him think he may put a charge of shot into a woman's body?"

So she sneered, and Thirl's hand drew her back. "Do you mean that?" he asked.

She nodded, and his hand felt for his pistol. But she stayed him. "Do not," she said; "it is a pity to begin—he will not here. It would be only a passing spasm of fury with him when he thought he saw me," and she went to the door.

"Stay here," he commanded. "Who is this rascal in front?" he asked.

"Tobiah the Dissenter," she answered. "He is a good enough man of his sort, a dweller in the town, having neither part nor lot with the smugglers and Marshmen. I cannot tell how he has been drawn into this business,—by some wiles of Aaron's, I suppose."

Thirl was not all convinced. "He is very set that I should deliver you to Neck," he said.

"There is something behind that I do not understand," was Ann's answer. "I must speak to Tobiah."

Thirl was against any such thing, but seeing her set on it, he at last consented to admit the Dissenter, after he had himself seen from the side-window the figure that lurked among the trees.

Tobiah was quite ready to parley, and to do so without

communicating with Aaron : indeed his confidence in that man, at times not of the strongest, was somewhat shaken by Ann's words. Ann opened the door a little way and Tobiah entered, finding Thirl and a pistol at his elbow.

"What have you come for?" Ann asked.

"To take you back," Tobiah answered.

"Why? What affair is it of yours?"

"It is the affair of righteousness. You have been seduced from your home: I would save you from your betrayer."

Ann's lips were parted for another question, but at this the words stayed, and she stared at him with a sudden shamed comprehension.

"It is false!" Thirl said, before the pause she left became oppressive—"false and gross at that."

Tobiah wagged his head. "So you say," he said; "but you left together before midnight, and I find you together——"

"It is a lie! it is Aaron Neek's lie!" Ann cried. "I came here of my own accord to show the way."

But Tobiah, addressing Thirl, went on unmoved, "And when I say 'Give her up, send her back to her friends,' you reply that better men than yourself shall be damned first."

"And I meant it," Thirl said; "to send her to Neek is to send her to death."

Tobiah looked sceptical; but Ann said, "I am ready to come with you. If that is all you want, why did you not say so

before. I will come at once; let us go."

She moved as if to the door, but Thirl looked round. "You will not go," he said quietly, remembering the lurking figure among the trees.

"I will," she answered.

"You will not."

For a moment they faced one another, the eyes of the woman looking defiance into those of the man. Gradually her glance shifted.

"I will protect your good name," he said gently.

"My name!" she flung at him in scorn. "What is my name? My name is nothing to me."

"It is something to me," he answered. "I have smirched it; I will clear it."

"No," she said.

Here Tobiah broke in. "The state of matrimony," he observed, "is one not to be lightly entered upon. Nevertheless, on occasions it is advisable. In this case I will leave you to choose between two evils—to part or to unite. The one appears grievous to you now, the other will afterwards. But you must choose, you must choose."

"Oblige me by ceasing your fool's chatter."

Thirl's voice struck chilly; but "Fool's chatter"! Tobiah cried, "Know, man, that it is the foolish things of this world that the Lord uses to confound the wise."

"That I can well believe," Thirl retorted. "You would confound any man who failed to confound and altogether damn you at the outset. Go

in there, and hold forth to what family portraits the old Squire has left on the walls."

And he pushed him into a room that opened from the hall and fastened the door after him.

Ann had crossed to the hearth-place. "I see now how the thing has been done," she said. "Aaron Neck has fooled Tobiah with this tale, so that his presence should give the affair a lawful appearance, and I might the more easily be made to come."

"Possibly," Thirl answered; "it does not alter the case."

He set a chair for her by the great table which stood in the centre of the hall, with feet let into the flags of the floor so that it could never be moved. "Will you not sit?" he said.

Then as she obeyed, "Why should we not marry?" he asked. "It is true we do not think we love or any such folly, but we are neither of us children or fools. There is no reason why a contract made in cold blood should not be at least as good as one made in hot."

"Between strangers?" she asked.

"Yes, if you call us strangers," he answered. "I have known women years, and known less of them than of you in a single night."

She did not answer: it might well be true, she knew. "Between one in my position and one in yours?" she said.

He smiled a little. "If you had lived as much as I, you would know better of what value is position."

She had nothing to say, so he went on. "It might make for the safety of my skin to marry a woman from hereabouts: it would certainly make for the safety of yours to remain under my protection. Indeed, by your own showing, nowhere outside these walls would be safe for you just now, so outside these walls you cannot go."

He was sitting opposite to Ann. She looked across to him, leaning her arms on the table. "How do you know that the whole is not of my planning?" she asked, watching him from under lowered lids. "I am not a fool, you say. How do you know that the whole is not a plan by which I would throw myself on your hands?"

But Thirl only smiled again. "I have seen hatred before," he said, "and I know it when I see it. Moreover, unless I greatly misjudge, you would not move a finger's length to compass the finest man in the kingdom, much less go to these pains for such as I."

She rose and went back to the fireplace, and he sat watching her. "You can hate, I know," he said, "but I doubt if you love overmuch. I know nothing of your affairs, but the chances are that in youngest girlhood you had some passing passion."

"How do you know?" she asked fiercely.

"I do not know. I ask your pardon for the reference. I did not mean to trouble you about the past; only, if that is the case, it should make the

future easier,—you will not likely want to marry any one else. As for me, I know little of women and care less for them. I shall never wish to marry another. I owe you something for my life; will you not permit me to pay this way? Take my name for the sake of appearances, and some certain income for the debt I owe, and lead your own life here, or away when to go is safe."

"It is madness," she said—"chivalrous folly."

He rose as if the talk were at an end. "The foolish things of this world are to confound the wise," he said lightly; "our friend who is hammering so loudly at the door told us so."

"But if you have no care for me," she said, but so low that he did not heed as he went to Tobiah's door. How was he to know that he, the one man who had shown her consideration and yet mastery, might almost win if he chose?

When Tobiah was let out from the gloomy dining-room in which he had been shut, he had somewhat to say about the indignity offered him. However, he was mollified when Thirl asked him to set about the necessary arrangements for the marriage. Afterwards, and before he left the house, Ann told him the truth of the story, beginning from the talk she had heard in Aaron's kitchen onwards to the end.

Tobiah swelled with indignation. "He would make me his cat's-paw, would he!" he cried. "He would use the purposes of the Lord and the strong words of righteousness to his own evil ends! We will see, good brother Aaron—we will see, smooth-voiced hypocrite, whose tongue is oil and deeds vinegar! The servant of the Lord is not to be duped; he wakes betimes. And he would pay me with the dower-chest—the chest which is rightly mine, and which he keeps with him in the house, detaining by subtlety and slimy words! I will have the dower-chest, good Aaron Neck; I will take it from under your oily nose, and, what is more, I will give it to her whom you hate. It will be my wedding-gift to you, Ann Ponsford: you shall not go quite dowerless to your husband,—you shall have the price that was to have been paid to compass your death and burial."

And in a state of warlike exultation Tobiah clapped his hat on his head and made for the door. Half-way there he stopped. "Let me out by some more retired way," he said. "I am not ready to meet friend Aaron yet; let him stand to cool his fat awhile longer among the trees."

So they let him out by the kitchen door, and he strode away on his business, they standing to watch him, the dazzling white world before and the dead stillness of the house behind.

III. THE COMING OF THE SNOW.

The snow began to fall again that afternoon, first a little, in fluttering flakes, afterwards more and more, so that by twilight the air was thick with it. By midnight it had blocked the already choked roads beyond any hope of passage. This was of small matter to most people, for on the island such things happened more winters than not, so no one was surprised nor much troubled. It mattered little to Aaron Neck, for he, being satisfied that some evil must have befallen Tobiah, went home before the snow grew heavy, determined in his mind to wait a more favourable opportunity for paying what he owed to Ann Ponsford. But to Tobiah the snow was of some account, for he had set out for the other side of the island. In those days there was only one parson for the whole island: there was a church both at the back, where the Old Hall was, and also at the front. The parson himself lived at the front, where the most of the people were: it was here that Tobiah would go. The way was bad enough as it was, and might have proved too much for a man shorter in the leg than Tobiah and less strong both in body and in the righteousness of his cause. He, however, won through, and some time after nightfall reached the parson's house. The good man gave him welcome and listened to his errand, promising to fulfil his share. Tobiah, well sat-

isfied, slept that night at the parson's house; but the morning found the snow so deep that to start again were not only madness but impossibility. Tobiah looked out, and being convinced of the state of the ways, saw that the cause was from the Lord, and he must abide where he was. So he abode, and spent the whole day in profitable discourse with his host, contending very mightily on matters spiritual, to the great enlightenment of himself and his hearer.

How the delay appeared to the two at the Old Hall none knew, but the snow which made the parson and his guest prisoners made these others also. To while away the time they set out to explore the house, of which neither yet knew much: this, soon after Tobiah left them, before they knew that their imprisonment was likely to be of some duration. During the forenoon they went over the whole house: into rooms long unused, damp and chill with the breath of the marshes; into long passages and cobwebbed garrets hidden high under the eaves; down echoing corridors and unlooked-for stairways; looking at frayed curtains and moth-eaten hangings, and furniture black and dusty with time. Everywhere was stillness, the stillness of death: outside the snow held the earth locked in silence; inside was a silence that could be felt.

"It is as if all the world were

dead," Ann said once as she stayed by a high window.

"And we alone were left, inheritors," Thirl added. Then, "You are tired," he said, for he thought the cold light showed lines of weariness on her face.

She shook her head, but he made her come back to the kitchen fire.

Later, he kindled a fire in another room and brought there chairs and books from the chambers they had explored. There they spent the afternoon, talking now of the marshland and the ways of the coast. Ann told all she knew, and Thirl, never thinking it a strange thing nor remembering that it was one he had not done before, spoke of his plans to drain the fen and reclaim some of the lost pasture-lands. Ann listened eagerly, with now a word and now a question, showing with pencil and paper how the land lay, helping to make the plans complete.

So dusk fell, and the snow without grew thicker and thicker. Gradually the fire burned low and red, and darkness filled all the room, making pencil and paper useless. For a time they sat in silence, each thinking his own thoughts. At last Ann spoke.

"I wonder when Aaron went," she said.

"His fat will be well cooled if he is still there," Thirl answered.

But Ann knew he would not be there. "He will have gone long ago," she said. "He never spares a fallen foe nor stands by a fallen friend: such he would take Tobiah to be."

"You do not love him," Thirl observed; and when Ann only answered "No," he asked why.

She hesitated, then she said, "He has a son, Robert—not a bad man like his father, not a very wise one, perhaps rather a poor creature, though he did not seem so to me. I was a young girl then, I knew nothing; no one but the Marshmen, and I—I thought I—— It was the passing passion of which you spoke."

"Forgive me," Thirl said gently, as if he would have stayed the confidence he had unwittingly forced; but she went on—

"There is little to tell. There was no troth ever plighted between us, or, indeed, many words of the sort; but Robert, I think, was willing, and his mother over-anxious; the neighbours, her friends, thought it as good as done, and Aaron openly spoke of it. Then, one hay-time, Aaron went to the town, and saw Cheesman Viney, the rich grocer. By harvest Robert was married to Sacriassa, the grocer's daughter and heiress."

So Ann spoke; afterwards there was silence, and the ashes crumbled and fell, and the snow pressed softly against the window-pane. At last Thirl said, "Would the passion have outlived a marriage?"

And Ann was forced to say, "No! Nevertheless," she added, "Aaron has an ill way of doing things; his taunts and his friends' taunts were not easy to bear. Moreover, since that day, and especially since his wife died, he has been

piling offence upon offence until there was an end."

"And you saved me to spite him?"

"In part. In part it was—Why should I stand by while you were done to death? You had done no harm. Nay, you carried the coals for me and spoke courteously: it was nothing, I know; you would have done it for any woman, but no other man had done it for me."

She rose abruptly. "It must be late," she said, and went out to the kitchen to get the meal.

They took it together, and afterwards by candle-light turned over old books, Thirl speaking of their writers, and sometimes reading a passage here or there. The hour was late before he turned the last page of a poet, and Ann took a candle from the table.

He held the door open for her to pass out—"Good night," he said.

"Good night," she answered, and crossed the hall, went up the stairs, and so by the long passage to the room where she had slept last night. A mirror hung over the mantel-shelf here; she looked at herself for a moment, then a flush dyed her cheek and a shadow darkened her eyes, and she turned away and went quickly to bed. So ended the first day.

On the second, when they rose in the morning and saw the white drifts that lay so deep, they knew that no one could get through to them yet. So, perforce, they must also spend that day together. For

some things it were as well, Thirl thought, for there was more that he wanted to hear and to say about his plan for draining the land. Well, too, Ann thought, for there was much she could tell him about the Marshmen and their ways,—things that might lead him to understand them, and deal wisely when he came to live alone among them. So the time sped swiftly and without lagging.

After dark, as yesterday, they drew the old curtains, and swept the hearth, and set tall copper candlesticks on the table.

"I heard a mouse in the wainscot," Ann said, listening to the faint sound of tiny feet.

"And I a cricket on the hearth," Thirl answered.

"Here?" she asked.

"No, in the kitchen, a while gone."

"It is the first sound of life in this dead place," she said.

"Ay," he answered, with his eyes on the fire; "the creatures are coming back. They think there will be warmth here, food on the table, laughter in the hall—a home—"

He stopped suddenly, and Ann had nothing to say, so she turned the leaves of a book she held. After a long time he asked her what it was, and then, as last night, they talked of books and writers, reading passages here and there till the hour was again late.

When Ann had taken her candle and gone that night, Thirl sat down again by the fire, listening for the scratch and scamper in the wainscot. He even scattered some crumbs

in the dark corner where he heard it, and watched the bright-eyed creature that came out to eat. Then suddenly he laughed harshly and frightened the small thing away.

"Little fool," he said, "you are mistaken; there will be no home here, neither laughter nor love."

Nevertheless, before he took his way upstairs he went into the kitchen and listened in the low firelight to the *chirp, chirp*, of the cricket under the hearth-stone.

So passed the second day.

On the next a tapping came at a closed window. A gull, stupid with cold and maimed by its efforts to find shelter among the inhospitable trees, threw itself against the frozen glass and fell stunned on the ledge. Ann took it in and to the fire, holding it close to her breast, that the warmth might come gradually. Afterwards she fed it, soothing it the while with the mournful, inarticulate sounds she had heard the birds make when they talked to one another on the lonely shore. Thirl looked at her curiously, marvelling at the tenderness of her touch and the softness in her eyes. Such a look had he seen in a painting of the Holy Mother at some foreign shrine, and he knew that it was the look of a woman who tends the helpless, the look this woman would bend on the babe of the man she loved. He turned away suddenly.

Later that day the gull grew better; at evening it stirred in its basket by the fire and called softly to know where it was.

The sound brought a memory to Thirl of his early home in the Lincolnshire fens, so that he was moved to speak of it to Ann. She listened with interest, then, "You will be glad that you came here," she said; "it will seem like home to you. The gulls often talk all day long here, and the great black geese in the bad weather and the redshanks that wade in the dykes."

Thirl nodded. "It is years since I have heard them," he said. "The old home was sold when I was a boy, and I came to London to make money."

Ann pushed her hair from her forehead: to her it seemed a bad thing to live among streets when one has been used to the free marshes. "You have lived there ever since?" she asked.

"Ever since," he said, "working alone to make money. Now I have made it, and still I am alone."

She said nothing. Earlier she had spoken of what she would do,—how, when the marriage farce was over and it was safe for her to leave, she would go inland to the house of one she used to know. But now she had no more to say, so for a while they sat with the big silence wrapping them round. Suddenly she raised her head.

"Do not do it," she said earnestly. "There is time yet,—no one can get through to us till the snow begins to melt. Before any one can be here I can go. There is an old boat in the boat-house; I can go to the mainland and get away before any know that I have gone. I shall be safe; I can take good

care of myself. Let me go, and do not do this thing; do not bind yourself to loneliness and an unshared hearth."

So she entreated, but he only asked, "Do you mean that you would rather that we did not marry?"

"Much rather," she answered.

"Why? Because you think if I did not marry you I might marry another, and so no longer be alone? Or because you fear such a desire might come to yourself."

He looked her keenly in the face as he spoke: for a moment she met his eyes. "I shall never marry another," she said, then lowered her lids.

"Very well, then," he said, and returned to his papers; but his manner told her that the point was not gained.

"Why do you persist?" she asked. "Do you think I shall not be safe if I go?"

"I am sure that you will not; you must stay for a while."

"And to stay I must have the cover of your name?" she cried scornfully. "Do you think it matters to me whether I am called Ann Ponsford or Ann Thirl?"

"It matters to me. I would rather you were called Ann Thirl."

"Even if it ruin your life?"

He smiled a little. "Ruin is a small price to pay for some things," he said, but though he smiled his eyes were grave. They grew graver still when Ann had gone for the night, and when he sat alone with the plans of the marshland before him; but his eyes fixed on the place where she had been by the fire, and where it almost seemed that he saw some ghost that another could not have seen.

IV. THE COMING OF THE DOWER-CHEST.

The marriage of the master of the Old Hall took place in January after the great snow. The entry of it is to be found in the register of the church of SS. Martha and Mary, the Reverend Cuthbert Price being then rector. The witnesses to the ceremony were Thomas, the clerk, and Susan, she who lived hard by the church, and on this occasion mopped enough of the snow-water from the edifice for the bride to stand on the altar-step without pattens, and yet not wet her feet more than moderately. For this she received the sum of one guinea,

and so ever afterwards was minded to stand by the newly married couple, being of the age that is ready to hold with the money-bag, even if there is horns and tail behind it.

There was yet another witness that day, Tobiah the Dissenter. He had some heart-searching as to whether or no he ought to enter the church; but coming to the conclusion that the cause was good if the place doubtful, and believing also that the ceremony could not be as well conducted without him as with him, he went. He was pleased to find that the

building within was as fairly whitewashed as any stable—to which, indeed, it was not without resemblance—the paintings idolatrous men of old had done on the walls limed out, and the pillars of Italian marble neatly coated likewise. Well satisfied with the simple and cleanly appearance of the place, he shouted his “*Amens*” lustily, and set his name in large letters to the register, where it remains to this day.

The master and his lady came together to the church, which was, as it were, almost in the garden of the Hall, and so easy to reach. The lady wore a gown of black Lyons velvet and a petticoat of crimson brocade, both of a past fashion and made for a woman narrower in the shoulder, the deficiency being met by a white kerchief and a tippet of sable fur. This on account of the fact that her own clothes were not yet dry, she having last night opened a door hastily and been whelmed in a shoot of half-melted snow from the porch roof. In this manner she was soaked to the skin, and as her things were long in drying, she was driven to find garments left behind by the fine madame of the old Squire, now long dead. This the good parson did not know—madame’s death was before his time—he only thought how handsome was the new mistress, as she came, without looking to left or right, down the path that had been cleared for her by the manservant, who had but lately come from the town.

When the ceremony was over

Tobiah took a hasty leave—he had urgent business, he said—and strode off down the lane without waiting for any. But the parson came with the new-married couple to the Hall, to take something before he set out on his homeward tramp.

The repast that day was scarcely bridal, but it was more than smoked bacon and ship’s biscuit, for Thirl’s servant had brought things with him from the town, and a woman of the village had been found both to sell fowls and to cook them. There was a look of life about the house; a couple or so of rooms had been set in some array. A young girl, daughter of the said woman, was in the great hall when the party came from church. She took Ann’s tippet and bonnet, making her feel that the days of lonely comradeship were gone. Gone they certainly were, and gone too her old position. When she sat at table some one stood behind her chair, and she who had served was served now. She was mistress and hostess to-day, and must behave as such, so she bent a courteous ear to Mr Price, leading him to talk garrulously of old times and past snows, so that he forgot who she was and what Tobiah had thought fit to tell him of the doings of the last days.

So the meal passed, and before the pale sun waned the parson set out on his homeward trudge. Thirl went to the gate to see him start: for a moment he stood watching him, then he turned about and went back to the house.

In the hall his man met him with some question, would he this or would he that. Thirl told him shortly "No," and stalked through the hall, now dusted and made to look as if living folk used it. Thirl noted the look, and it did not seem to please him, for he shut himself in the room where he and Ann had spent long hours during the snow. For him, too, the days of the lonely comradeship were over, and it was not clear what remained.

Ann sat the afternoon in her chamber, the one at the end of the long corridor. As the day waned and darkness, sharpened with frost, fell, there came a tapping at her door. It was the little maid, who asked if she would be served in her room or would go downstairs.

"I will go down," she said, and she went slowly, with the sweep of the silks she still wore, along the passage, across the gallery, and down the stairs. Her face betrayed nothing; but in her heart she felt as if all were a dream, as if it were some other that passed slowly, while she, invisible, watched from the shadows. The thing would end, she knew—she would wake to end it. She would go down wide stairs, down and down, as one does in dreams; past dark wainscot, as now, where a face for a moment glowed in the candlelight, glowed and vanished and glowed again till it vanished away in the dark of waking. All would vanish, as dreams vanish at the cheerless coming of the winter's day, that calls the waker to work

before dawn. The gallery where her steps echoed would be the echo of a dream, the hall where the fire glimmered would be the glimmer of a dream, and the man who waited her there with the keen kind eyes and the courteous hand, he too would be the figure of a dream. It was well that the waking should come soon—before he became too real, too near, before he usurped all now and all then, so that waking should be filled with bitter-sweet pain, the memory that clings as the scent of the trees clings for all time to the timbers of oak and of sandalwood.

So ran her mind as she sat by the fire in the room where they two had sat while the snow lay thick without. So ran her mind as she shook from the creased folds of the old gown the subtle smell of the trees caught from the chest where it had lain. And as she shook it she knew that the thing was done, and that for always he— She looked up, and met his eyes fastened on her in the candlelight.

It was just then that there came a loud knocking at the outer door.

"What is it?" she said, half rising.

"No harm," he answered, "or it would not announce itself so noisily."

Nevertheless, since she was nervous, he forestalled the servant and went out to see, she listening anxiously in the room where he left her.

But she need not have been uneasy, for the man who knocked

came from Tobiah, so his errand was necessarily virtuous and, on this occasion, peaceable.

When Tobiah left the church after the marriage ceremony, he set out at once for the shore, where by the landing-stage a boat lay in readiness, within it two stout men, Samuel and Samuel the less, worthy cousins and staunch Dissenters, not more in the contraband trade than most. These two loved Aaron Neck no better than did many others, and being mostly concerned in business at the other side of the island, they were less in his power, and so not afraid to lend a hand to Tobiah. Thus, without ado, they rowed the Dissenter over to the mainland and made the boat fast hard by the causeway. Here Tobiah got out, leaving the cousins with the boat. They demurred, but he was firm.

"What need of more?" he said. "The Lord can save by few as well as by many. I go alone—the sword of the Lord is with me."

And he went, after setting them a time when they should follow him. He went by the road, straight to the Black Horse Inn, which was but a little distance.

Aaron Neck was within doors: when he saw Tobiah coming he was surprised, for he believed him hurt, or at least captive, at the Old Hall.

"Why!" cried he. "This is a pleasant sight! You are sound? You are free?"

"Both," answered Tobiah, "and come for the dower-chest, which is mine by will of your

good wife, dead before Michaelmas."

"The dower-chest?" Aaron repeated slowly, as if he were trying to remember. "Oh, ay, I said you should take it when you brought Ann Ponsford back."

"*You* said," Tobiah retorted with scorn; "but I did not say, —I did not make terms for what is mine. The chest is mine, and without it I do not leave this house."

Aaron nodded his head and spoke softly: Tobiah was a tall man and lean, for whom he was no match; moreover, this lean man stood between the landlord and the loaded fowling-piece that hung on the wall. "Of course it is yours," he said; "you shall take it as soon as may be. But Ann, what of Ann? Surely you have not left her in the clutches of the villain? You have not, by omission, lent your countenance to sin, and, by mischance, been overcome of the devil?"

"Overcome of the devil I nearly was," Tobiah returned. "A white, fat-livered devil, with an oily tongue and the poison of asps behind it; but, thanks be to the Lord, I am saved from him, I have been delivered from his snare, and, an instrument in the hands of the Almighty, I have been permitted to deliver others whom this Satan would have bound."

As he spoke he drew nearer to Aaron, who was shifting backwards with the thought to get within reach of the gun. But Tobiah caught sight of it hanging on the wall, and with a pounce he took the

other by the shoulder. "Hey, Master Pharisee!" he said; "this is no matter for carnal weapons: weapons cannot save you, stout liar! Already your fate is sealed for this world,—know that your deception is discovered; and for the next the fire is ready, and soon, well larded as you are, you shall be set before it, and roast, roast, roast, while the devils turn the spits of perdition!"

He plumped him down on a chair as he spoke. Aaron panted, "Let me go!" once, and blasphemed once, but Tobiah paid no heed.

"Hear now what is done," he said. "Ann Ponsford, for whose welfare you were solicitous, is safe; she is this day the wedded wife of Draycott Thirl, Esquire, of the Old Hall. He will be able to maintain her good name in the teeth of such of his sort as may desire to call it in question, and her bodily safety in the teeth of such of yours as may have designs upon it. The men on the front side of the island, where I was detained by stress of weather, know this, and also sundry other things concerning you which it was advantageous they should know. Two of them are waiting now at the causeway, unless, perchance, they have already set out here. They will be here before long, and since they are men of some violence, not yet perfect in the way of the Lord, it will perhaps be wiser if I secure you against their fury."

So saying he took the coil of rope that he had brought

with him, for what purpose Aaron had not before guessed, and lashed him firmly and securely to the chair.

"I will pay you for this!" the fat man panted, with murder in his little eyes. "Men are sorry that cross me!"

"Tut!" said Tobiah, drawing out a paper and beginning to write. "The crossing of you is as the crossing of any other ill beast—a little snorting, a little fume, a stench,—the stench of brimstone and the pit,—that is all. As for paying, you have other debts also to pay, to discharge the which I am here to help you. 'The hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields is of you kept back by fraud,' and has been for fifteen years—over long a time for the cries of them that reaped to deafen 'the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth,' who has sent me to collect the dues owing to Ann Ponsford, a labourer without hire and a servant without pay."

Aaron writhed in his chair, or rather he would have done had his bonds let him. "You would rob me!" he cried. "You abuse me and threaten me and assault me in my own house, and now you rob me!"

But Tobiah was not moved. "'Though the wicked man heap up silver as the dust,'" he quoted, "'and prepare raiment as the clay. He may prepare it, but the just shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver.' But it is not your money-bags I want for Ann, it is only a little matter of gear and gar-

ments, such as women have, and such as your wife left behind her. It is ill that a bride should go to her husband without even a change of raiment; your wife, good soul, would not have had it so. I go now to fill the drawers of the dower-chest for the bride."

He flattened out one of the two papers he had written as he spoke, while Aaron between snapping teeth said, "The dower-chest to Ann Ponsford?"

"Why, certainly," Tobiah answered; "what should I do with such a thing? It would not go in at my doorway, and as soon pass through a window in my house as you, fat sinner, through the strait gate of heaven."

With that Tobiah set up the paper, which ran, "This man, Aaron Neck, is a prisoner of the Lord, and he who touches him for the increasing or diminishing of his pains must reckon with Tobiah the Dissenter, emissary of Jehovah, who is above."

He read this to Aaron, and putting it in a place where it could easily be seen, went upstairs.

A while later the cousins Samuel came in. When they saw Aaron bound their eyes sparkled, but when they saw the paper they halted. Just then Tobiah, who had heard them enter, called to them to come up. They did so, and found the Dissenter in the guest-room stuffing things such as women wear into the dower-chest.

"Go to the stable," so he

ordered, "get ready the cart, bring it and set it close under the window. See also if you can find rope: I have been compelled to already use the piece that I brought. When the cart is ready come up again: we must make shift to move the chest between us and lower it from the window as we can. It is clear that there is no one within call, or Aaron would have already called him, if not to aid the work of righteousness, then to hinder it."

Samuel and Samuel the less grinned upon one another; but Tobiah, who felt he was but doing his duty, only bade them be quick. Soon the new cart was ready, the oob harnessed, and a rope found; and the three between them set to getting the chest down. They took out the great drawers; they found the bolts that fastened the upper half to the lower; they separated it so that it could be moved, and then, tugging and panting, they got it into the cart, and covered it over, so that the beauty of its polished wood should not be spoiled.

All together, and leading the horse, they went down to the causeway. There they separated, Samuel to take the boat back to the island, and Samuel the less to drive the cart to the Old Hall. Before he started Tobiah put the other paper that he had written in the dower-chest, on the shelf where piles of linen lay in the place where Ann herself had lain not so long ago.

"Drive straight to the Old

Hall," Tobiah said. "See that the chest is taken in safely; beyond that there is no need for you to see any. The asking and answering of idle questions is but a waste of time."

Samuel the less nodded. "And you?" he said.

"I go to talk with Aaron Neck for the good of his soul. I shall still be talking with him when you come back with the cart, so there will be no need for you to wait to stable it."

So Tobiah answered, and Samuel grinned again; but he turned his head away to do so, and, shaking the reins, set off across the causeway.

It was already after twilight, though there being frost in the air the sky was clear, and still burned low down with the light left at sunset. The road to the Old Hall was somewhat long, and owing to the late weather ill going, so it was long after dark before Samuel came to the Hall. Here, as Tobiah bade him, he knocked, and with little ado and less explanation got in the chest, and set it up as it had been set up in the guest-room at the Black Horse. As soon as this was done Samuel took his leave.

Thirl had also lent a hand to the moving of the chest: as soon as it was done and Samuel gone he dismissed the servant who had helped, and went back to the room where Ann still stood listening, unable to make out what was taking place.

"What is it?" she asked as he entered.

"The dower-chest," he an-

swered, with a twist at the corner of his mouth.

"The dower-chest?" she repeated, her face graver than he could make his appear.

"Yes; come and see."

She hung back, but he led her into the hall, where, standing against the dark panelling, was the great chest of tulip-wood. As her eye fell on it, slowly her colour rose and slowly faded again as she recalled when she had last seen it, and how behind its screening doors she had hidden that night. Like a flash the thought came to her, and like a flash the thought of how things had gone since then.

If the thought also came to Thirl his face did not show it, as he watched her in the glow of the firelight.

"A present for the bride," he said.

She turned upon him. "Then it is not for me," she answered; "I am no bride."

The twist left the corner of his mouth and his face grew grave and old. "No," he said; "it is lover and mistress that makes husband and wife, and we were only comrades."

She caught her breath at the lingering pain of the last words, but she looked away saying nothing. He was standing near her by the fire; in its light he searched her averted face. "And now," he said; but though his voice died away in a question she still did not speak.

"We were comrades," he said, "and we are, we are—what?"

He had placed his hands on her shoulders, he was looking

her in the face whether she would or no; he compelled her to look back, he mastered her with a mastery that was sweeter to her than sweetest victory. "What?"

The voice was low, just a yearning, but lower the answer—"What you will."

When the dower-chest had been brought into the house the doors of the upper part were fastened; but either it was insecurely done, or the message Tobiah had put within had waited long enough, for suddenly the doors fell apart and one opened slowly. As it did so something tumbled out,—a petticoat of lawn finely embroidered, which had belonged to Aaron's wife, who was of good stock. With the petticoat there fell also the paper. Thirl picked it up and held it while Ann read it:—

"To Ann Ponsford, on the day of her wedding with Draycott Thirl, Esquire, this chest from Tobiah the Dissenter."

"The gear within, the reward of her labours—'The workman is worthy of his meat,' 'the labourer of his hire,' and the bride of her necessary outfit."

"The Lord be with you. Amen."

So they read together. Then Thirl took up the petticoat, which for fineness was fit only for the hottest weather. "It is certain, comrade," he said as he felt it, "that Tobiah thought

you would not go till after the summer's drought let us get our great enterprise under way."

Ann laughed, and took the garment from him, blushing.

"What folly!" she said.

But he answered gravely again, using the words of the Dissenter, his arm stealing about her the while, "It is the foolish things of this world that the Lord uses to confound the wise."

Of the enterprise of Draycott Thirl and his wife Ann the fruits remain to this day in fertile meadow and reclaimed salting, drained and recovered according to the plans drawn up during the great snow. This work at first found but little favour with the Marshmen, though in time they approved it; more especially when they found that Thirl, though he did not assist the contraband trade, did not interfere with it. In his wife Ann they had one who, while she did not forget old friends, did not, after the vengeance on Aaron Neck, remember old hurts and spites—a thing rare in woman, and making for the peace of the island.

Thus it was that the dower-chest came to Ann Ponsford, and thus that Tobiah the Dissenter won a victory over the devil (in the person of Aaron Neck).

U. L. SILBERRAD.

A RIVER OF CATHAY.

I.

THE precise point at which you first see the Irrawaddy depends upon the season. The Pilot Brig, in March, swings to her anchor in blue water, and you sight her in the Bay; but in July, though her moorings have never shifted, it is a brown flood that pours past her sides, you see and scent as much of Burma as the laws of hydrostatics permit to be held in suspension, and though the land is as yet but a thickening of the horizon-line, you know you are already in the River.

The land that soon appears on either side of you merges very unobtrusively in the water. Burma begins without pomp of surf or majesty of cliffs. Trees start up out of the flatness, buffaloes blot the low sky-line; as the shelving banks close in there is a smell of the wrought earth. Here and there the thatched roofs of villages show, with groups of toddy- and cocoa-palms. A brown smear low in the blue sky tells where the smoke and dust of Rangoon roof the city.

The sun is low. The gold bell-shaped mass of the Shwe Dagôn Pagoda comes in sight. It stands upon the only high ground for miles about, and it shines bravely in the level rays. But the city is not imposing: like the country itself, it does not impress you at a glance, makes no bold bid for your attention. The sea does not come home to it

as to Sydney or Stamboul; it has no castled heights like Capetown or Hongkong. Among river cities, it is not terrible like domed London; does not, like old Calcutta, open its arms to the stranger with palaces and gardens. Rangoon is modern and commercial, but nature has forbidden it to be self-assertive.

On both banks the chimneys of mills still vomit their smoke into the calm air. The western sky glows green, splashed with wild crimson, and the water shades from crimson into pearl. As the sun sinks, syren and whistle utter their farewells. The sky deepens into purple, the stars assert themselves between the masts and funnels, emerald and ruby sparks gem the shipping, the bells are struck, the flags slide down. The iron noises that have echoed all day from the ocean steamers are hushed.

The river seems luminous; it is the last thing to acknowledge and accept the regiment of night. By its radiance the other shore is seen, faint and far and ghostly. On the eddying surface small drifts of rubbish hurrying down gather a moment of importance while crossing the field of light.

"A certain moment cuts
The deed off, calls the glory from the
grey."

Now the pearl-colour grows livid, and now the river becomes a feature of the night.

There is a Volapuk of ports, containing words current wherever, east of Suez, men go down to the sea in ships. One of these words is "sampan." From Port Darwin northward to Shanghai, perchance to Vladivostok, on the coast where the kindred tongue, Pidgin-English, has its highest development, this word has a general application to anything that floats, from a dinghy to a battleship, as well as denoting in particular the 'longshore wherry of the place. West of Singapore its wider meaning disappears. By the wharves of the Irrawaddy and the Salween, it means a keelless tub shaped like the half of a Barcelona nut divided lengthwise, and having two painted boards projecting sternward, the purpose whereof no man knows. The evolutionist might classify them as rudimentary or degenerate wings. The craft sits like a duck upon the water, is absurdly crank, but commodious, and easy to be propelled and steered by one pair of hands.

Into such a contrivance you descend, let us suppose, after dinner. You perch yourself, with some discomfort, upon the flat projection of the bow, and tell your boatman to row up-stream. He is invariably a Chittagonian. His skull-cap and beard proclaim the True Believer, but he garbs his lower man in the Burmese fashion. He is agile and muscular and crafty, and upon occasion voluble beyond belief. He owns his boat, is well-to-do, and barring perhaps that unfortunate little affair with the

Port Trust Police, he is a happy man, or as happy as a Bengali ever is.

He stands facing the bow, and pushes his short sculls outward, breast high. They creak and groan abominably, and the noise seems to afford him contentment, even as the distressing howls of his axle seem to please the Burman cart-driver.

Slowly we ascend the current. The thought may be something worn, but surely a great river is a vastly romantic affair. In Europe a river is a pleasing incident of the landscape. One knows, of course, that it is also a page of history, a highway of industry, and a means of livelihood for thousands, but these thoughts are not primary, nor upon the surface of the mind. In the East one beholds the working of the wheels of things. "God has said," wrote the Emperor Akbar, "from water all things were made." Consider these endless tons of pouring water. This thing that sucks and gobbles at the mooring-chains and swirls among the piles of the black wharf has come a thousand miles and more, from among untrodden snows, from the mysterious heart of Asia. It has fed millions of beings, human and bovine, of those for whom

"Life is a long-drawn question
Between a crop and a crop,"

and its work is not yet done. Untiring, itself impregnated with the soil it has fertilised, it is eagerly sliding to the sea. It is the road to England,

and to-morrow it will bear away some of these tall ships, crammed to the hatches with its own produce, the grain that is to feed millions more. And after it has mingled with the ocean, it will return, months hence, in the form of rain-clouds, and slake again the thirst of the land. So turn the mills of God.

Yet here, under the bows, where it is so black you cannot see even a surface, its evil noises seem to speak of death, not life. How gladly it would drag you down! With what ease it would prevail against a strong swimmer! How scornfully it would roll and tumble a corpse!

Here along the wharves, and a cable's length from shore, lie the big steamers, straining upon their holding-gear. Here is one that by this time to-morrow will be far at sea, glowing with light, merry with the talk and singing of the homeward bound, but now she is as dark and silent as a village street at midnight. Far out lie the sailing-craft, the iron *Lochs* and *Sierras* and *Castles*, cavaliers of the sea, and humbler wooden wayfarers, a catalogue of quaint and pretty names. From Mersey, Clyde, and Humber they come; they go to London, to Melbourne, to Bremen, Lima, who knows whither? To Guam very likely, that unauthentic shore dear to the Board of Trade.

These use the river, but to them it is known only as a harbour. Here is a craft for which, notwithstanding the "Glasgow" on her stern, the Irrawaddy is home. She stands

upon the water like a house, the corrugated iron roof of her upper deck thirty feet above the stream. She has petroleum-furnaces, and carries at her bow a searchlight to show her the way at night through the devious tangle of creeks, the arterial system of the Delta, or when navigating, among intricate sand-bars, the upper reaches far in the interior.

The quaver of an accordion floats from one sailing-ship, and from another the searching wail of a violin. Some of these ships have lain here for months, and the crews have spent their cash and exhausted the diversions of the shore. They must make the time pass of an evening as best they can aboard. Better so, for is not mercantile Jack, ashore in a tropical port, as uncomfortable, but for the name and glory of the thing, as your Chittagonian gondolier would be in London? One has often seen Jack about the streets. It is, commonly, well on in the forenoon when, wearying of the chaste delights of the Sailor's Home, he sallies forth to "have a look round." Rigged out in the one shore-going suit that serves him equally for Colombo or Dundee, his head fenced from the unpitying sun by a cloth cap or an absurd hat of stiff felt, he tramps the fairway of the road. The hot dust cleaves to his well-greased ankle-boots. He and his mates (you never see him solitary) peer about them with the curious, half-seeing eyes of children. For aught of intercourse with the crowd around them they are merely deaf and dumb. Chance and a

huge thirst (to look at them makes you perspire) direct their wandering feet. Foredoomed prey of the pimp, the brothel yawns for them, and the holiday will end ingloriously in the unrejoicing stupor of drink.

Our gondolier tires; let us turn and go down-stream. But for the unresting swirl of the water against obstacles, the river is all silent; the noises of the night come from the shore. The incredible uproar of a Chinese theatre, with its cymbal-and-triangle clash and the tortured thin human voice in the upper register, strikes a true barbaric note. From somewhere nearer at hand the throbbing tom-toms of some circle of Hindus repeat one perfectly-timed measure with

dismal iteration. It becomes more rapid and seems to approach a frenzied climax, which, however, it never reaches. One understands such music causing excitement; in the European it produces a fierce longing to destroy the performers. This is not really the "unchanging East." If we were really in the Arabian Nights, the "contrapuntal effect of the bastinado" would be added to the orchestra.

The pie-dog yells from the alley. Some Burman reveller cheers his solitary way by shouting an unsteady recitative. A Brahmin toots his conch. A gun booms; half-past nine. We have drifted down towards the Battery, and "Last Post" gallantly closes the concert.

II.

Rangoon is cosmopolitan and hybrid. The stranger shall stand an hour in the street, and scarce any thing or person shall remind him that he is in Burma, not Singapore or Colombo, or some other port of the British East. The Burmese are a nation of peasants; they cling to the soil, and the city is built and served and peopled, as it is policed and ruled, by aliens. And the Irrawaddy, as we have so far seen it, is but "Rangoon River," the servant of the city and the port, a great engine of commerce used by all the world. The qualities it has in common with other havens of the Empire are so many that those proper to itself are scarcely noticed.

It is in the great inland reaches far above the Delta

that the river has its own character, its individual life and scenery. In Upper Burma towns and villages cling to the banks, their long streets parallel to the high-water line. Along the margin of the more populous towns you see boats in the article of building.

The absence of caste rules in Burma is not, after all, an unmixed blessing. The manual dexterities, the mastery of tools and materials, that the craftsman inherits through generations of his forebears, who have done the same work all their lives, so common on the west, are almost unknown to the east, of the Bay of Bengal. The "average" Burman is often a jack-of-all-trades, and but seldom master of one. Fundamentally a tiller of the soil,

he is able, with the aid of a *dah* and a neighbour or two, to knock together a house, a plough, or a cart. He can, if need be, even scoop himself a rude canoe from a tree-trunk and make a shift to navigate it. The results of these labours are amateurish. What we call specialisation is rare among Burmans until you reach the border-line between the work of the craftsman and that of the artist.

Now, among crafts which lie close to that border-line, that of the boat-builder is surely one: upon the Irrawaddy it is so, at any rate. And of all structures to which the Burman of to-day turns his hand, the boat seems to me at once the most satisfying to the æsthetic sense, and, by a happy conjuncture, the most solid and enduring. The modern pagoda is commonly a rubbishy affair of slack-baked brick and cheap stucco; the modern monastery too often a thing roofed with grey iron and decorated in stamped tin; the ordinary village house is frail and sketchy, the cart a miracle of clumsiness. But the navigation of the great river has evolved a type of boat admirably pleasing to the eye and at the same time well adapted to its purpose. Its ancestry is patent, for even the largest and best of these vessels have as their basis and substructure the simple "dug-out," the lineal descendant of the hollowed trunk in which the earliest prehistoric navigator adventured upon the yet untried element and opened a new world to the enjoyment and service of man.

It is a fine sight to see a

score or so of these craft standing shored up along the bank, waiting to be launched. The rich colour of the teak is brought out by careful oiling; no paint conceals its beauty. The builders know nothing of wave-lines, and are innocent of theories of naval architecture, yet the sweeping forms of the vessels have both grace and dignity. The full bows taper somewhat suddenly to a cut-water, the plough-like form of which recalls the modern warship and the classical galley. As in China, an eye appears on either bow; but instead of being realistic and grotesque, it is an adornment, an eye in massive carving, gilded, and conventional in treatment, with flowing, decorative exterior lines. But it is upon the stern-works that the builder expends the most labour for a purely decorative end. Aft the low gabled deck-house rises a kind of miniature poop, a lofty structure, generally of open carved work, supporting and sheltering the seat from which the commander cons and steers the craft. In many boats the elaboration of design and quality of execution of these carvings, all in the same deep-tinted teak-wood, are only equalled by the best type of decoration found in religious buildings. The main lines of the hull run up into a lofty prolongation of the stern-post, and this is often surmounted by a little platform carrying the carved and painted effigy of some bird or animal, or of a comical human figure, such as an Englishman in a pith hat.

The mast (no boat has more than one) is made of two giant

bamboos, tapering together and joined near the top. The butts do not pierce the deck; the bamboos are kept upright, when the boat is under sail, by cross-bars between two stout posts solidly built into the hull, and by fore and aft guys: at other times the mast lies along the deck. The sail, an acre of brown or white cotton, is made fast to a bamboo yard, mast-headed with a block and line. Sometimes a pair of topsails are carried, one on each side of the mast, on an upper yard.

During the rains a strong wind blows up-stream for days together. Then, on any considerable reach, you may see at one time as many as a dozen of these fine craft breasting the strong current under sail, and doing their four or five miles in the hour. Their broad canvas well rounded by the following wind (for the Burman skipper thinks the more balloon-like his sail the more wind it is holding), deep laden, steady, and stately, the waves raised by the contest of wind and stream giving them just heave enough to convey that suggestion of eagerness that makes any sailing-vessel beautiful and alive, they sweep by, a goodly pageant for any boat-lover to see.

Though Burman boat-builders are good craftsmen, ages of access to vast rivers have left the race but indifferent boatmen. And the Burman sailor, one supposes, is the worst God ever made. Give him a wind square aft, and he is happy; let the breeze shift but a couple of points toward the

beam, and he becomes uneasy; three points, and he will down sail and anchor, or run for the bank and tie up. I write as a layman, but surely a stable craft even with one square sail should do better than this, and if not, a people of any sailorly genius would long ago have evolved a better sail-plan.

The truth is, however, that delays and interruptions in a voyage matter but little to that amazingly easy-going person, the Burmese trader. Weather-bound for a day or a week, merchant and crew apply themselves with real zest to idleness, or serenely partake the amusements and social life of the next village.

The boats I have been trying to describe are the cargo-carriers, upon which the greater part of the riverine population depend for their means of export and import. Besides these, of course, are hundreds of smaller craft, from the rude canoe such as any villager can make for himself, and the shallow elegant boats for one or two paddles, used in fishing, to the big and somewhat cumbrous open boat for oars or sail, used for ferries and for journeys up or down the stream. Then there are the immensely long, narrow, and fragile racing-boats for twenty or more paddles. Every village possesses two or three of these, and on the days before a festival they are seen flying up and down the current to the swift digging stroke of the crews, always accompanied by the shouting of a rhythmic chant, and sometimes by the metronomic striking of a gong.

Rafts play a large part in the life of the river. The great rafts of teak logs are not very conspicuous, the specific gravity of this noble wood, even when the sap is out of it, being so great that the upper surface of the mass is always awash or nearly so. From afar off the figures of the raftmen seem to walk magically upon the water. The invaluable bamboo is rafted down in bundles, which, tied together and carrying little thatched houses for the navigators and their families, cover great areas of the stream. They descend the current with dignified slowness, six or seven (or, as a Burman would say, "four or five or seven or ten") miles in the day. Remembering the life led by the immortal Huckleberry Finn, one is inclined to think that on such a raft one could fleet the time pleasantly, with a roomy hut, a gun and books and fishing-tackle, looking to arrive in port some time before Old Age had supervened. The scenery of the river would unroll itself like some gigantic panorama. One would idle past long villages, somnolent in the heat of day, gay at morning and evening with the clatter and sport of children, the movement of boats, and the prosecution of the affairs of men. In the season of low water, long islands, accretions of sand with a natural top-dressing of fertile silt, green with tobacco and root-crops, divide the broader reaches into channels. These islands are dotted with the temporary houses of the cultivators, and you may see the plough-cattle being taken

to them in boats. The dwindled stream winds past interminable stretches of bone-white sand, torturing to the eye, and by their blank monotony discomfoting to the mind. "Such quantities of sand" might well draw tears from a whole school of Walruses and a whole trade union of Carpenters. Here for many hours one would be floating by a plateau crowded with ancient, partly ruinous, pagodas and temples, relics in massive brickwork, as old as Westminster, of the pious munificence of half-forgotten Buddhist kings. There one would see caves, hollowed like the nests of martins, in the face of a cliff, where ascetic hermits have lived and died seeking the peace that is not of this world, and not far from them, sitting on the knees of barren hills, the red iron tanks and gaunt wooden towers of American petroleum-miners, who successfully apply the methods learned in Pennsylvania to the soil of Cathay. The course would lie at times between high cliffs of yellow sandstone, haunted by pigeons and bee-catchers, and at others between low banks beyond which flat fields stretch away and away to the blue distant ridge of the horizon. Ranges of rocky hills, ribbed and scarred like those of the Red Sea coast, here and there mirror their nakedness in the steel-blue water.

I leave the inanimate scenery, to return to the moving life and human interest of the river. There is one kind of raft, the pot-raft, which is, I suppose, peculiar to the rivers of Burma.

It is formed of those large glazed earthen jars, called by Europeans "Pegu jars," and known all over the East by the name of "Martaban." The names show that these famous vessels had their origin in Burma, and Sir Henry Yule quotes a historical reference to them as early as 1508. For Western readers they may be best described as resembling in size and form the vessels in which, at the theatre, the would-be pillagers of Ali Baba's house are hidden, and in which they meet their doom at the hands of Morgiana. It is, by the way, curious to note that the ingenious translator of 'Mille et une Nuits' had himself seen these jars. In that agreeable and informing work, 'The Upper Burma Gazetteer,' vol. ii. p. 399, I find, apropos of Pegu jars: "Antoine Galland's Journal in Constantinople says: 'Les Turcs en font un (*sic*) grand estime et aseptent (*sic*) bien cher à cause de la propriété qu'elle a de se rompre à la présence du poison.'" They are bound together, to the number of a hundred or more, in the interstices of a framework of bamboo, and floated to Prome or Rangoon for distribution over the country.

It is not in miles or tons, it is not by statistics, that the vastness and might of the river can be best conveyed to the mind. And though its majesty is apparent by day when the eye can measure its bigness, it becomes more impressive in the darkness of night. It is then that it seems best to adapt itself to the mood of the beholder. Indulgently, almost, it

seems to interpret his thoughts to himself, and then, like the stars or the sea, it tells its own message, hushing the brief and petty discords of human life in the ordered harmony of eternal law.

I leaned, one sleepless night, from a cabin window of a moored steamer. The curve of the vessel concealed the hither shore; the opposite bank was a vague irregular blackness obscuring the lower stars. There was no moon, and the water, unruffled by any breath of wind, was invisible save where it reflected the stars. Where I could see it, the surface seemed in colour and texture like those dull smooth plates of metal upon which Japanese artists sometimes paint. The reflections of two or three great stars made trails of misty light on the still surface, and by a curious optical effect after long gazing these seemed to erect themselves out of the blackness until they showed like tall white shapes, each headed by a spot of brilliant light. They seemed to sway almost imperceptibly to a slow and majestic rhythm. They were like water-spirits, or the ghosts of drowned women.

The only sound was made by the sucking of the black, hurrying water far below me, a sound that is always sinister and cruel. By the magic of the night and the river, I seemed to look upon a scene belonging to an unfamiliar world. The sense of loneliness was so strong, I might have been the last, or the first, of human creatures, or my window might have opened upon another planet, upon

which Death had conquered life.

A faint breeze stole along the reach, with a sound like sighing. Upon the distant shore the forms of trees took shape against the sky. From some invisible monastery came the throbbing note of a gong. The eastern sky warmed into purple, into crimson, into orange, and the stars faded. The river took on the hues of steel and silver. It was saying, "Behold my peace," when the world awoke.

The British East is full of violent contrasts, and I think few are more seizing than those caused by the passage, on the river, of one of the mail-steamers of the Flotilla Company. Say that she passes at night: you are perhaps encamped in the enclosure of a monastery in some small isolated village. The measure of your detachment from the world of Europe and To-day is a thing not to be expressed in miles, a thing scarce tellable in words. The life around you, material and mental, is in essentials the life of four centuries ago. The events that have convulsed the world and changed the face of civilisation have left these people and their daily lives untouched. For them, change does not exist.

The exile does not formulate these thoughts; at least, if he be wise, he will not dwell upon them, but the facts are apparent. And, here comes the Up-Mail.

With her petroleum fuel (produced in the country), her light draught, great carrying capacity, and immensely powerful engines made to battle with the strongest currents of this

mighty river, she may perhaps be said to represent the last word in river-steamer construction. The white beam of her searchlight heralds her, wheeling from bank to bank and making confusion among the bird community. It glances from the gilded spire of a little pagoda, and for an instant illuminates the brown wall of the monastery. The withered face of a monk, composed, inquiring, is seen for that instant, like a painting on ivory, framed by the opening of a tiny window. The beam sweeps the village street, and a chorus goes up from the village dogs: their masters, unmoved, give no sign. The steamer draws abreast, and close under the high bank upon which you stand. The open-sided roofed saloon of the forward upper deck is lighted like a ballroom. There is the sparkle of glass and metal; flowers, shoulders, dress-coats, the passengers are at dinner. Padgett, M.P., is there, very likely (it is the cold weather), and with him the Hon. Mrs and Miss Padgett, and several friends. A faint echo of the talk and laughter floats up into your darkness, and is gone, like the swinging beam of light. There are people speaking English, talking of Town, of books, the play, pictures, of going Home next month; there the wine and ice are going round; and here are you and your camp-cot and candle-stick, and your servants snoring somewhere, and your pony munching in the darkness, and the lights going out in the village, and an invisible monk muttering himself to sleep.

ERNEST DAWSON.

COSAS DE ESPAÑA.

BY A LATE RESIDENT IN SPAIN.

THE expression "*Cosas de España*," even in the mouth of a Spaniard, is generally accompanied by a twinkle in the eye. If, therefore, any of my readers take exception to some of these notes of a sojourn in Spain they will please to remember that twinkle in the eye, and not impute any malice aforethought or any desire on my part to sneer at that delightful country where I spent so many happy days. Certainly one does meet in Spain with what some one has called "*Queerosites*."

When I was at Malaga the lighthouse was out of order, and some Americans had complained officially that their shipping interests were being damaged. No answer was received for two years. Then it was declared that it was the fault of the earthquake which had taken place many years previously. Finally, the light was put out altogether, because it interfered with the fireworks. When a pair of boots I had ordered did not fit and I complained to the maker, he arrived indignantly to protest. "They fit here," he said (prodding my tender toe), "and they fit there" (another prod); "you cannot expect them to fit everywhere all at once." Such stories have a Hibernian ring about them. This supports the theory that among the inhabitants of the south of Ireland there are to be found distinct traces of

Spanish blood, dating, no doubt, from the days of the Armada, which accounts, you will gallantly admit, for the beauty of the inhabitants. But to return to our muttons, or in this case to our bulls,—for no one can speak of Spain without mentioning bull-fighting. Foreigners, especially Englishmen, have so often denounced this national sport that he would be a bold man who said anything in its favour. It must be remembered, however, that if all sport was prohibited that involved cruelty to animals, several of our national pursuits would have to be disestablished. The difference is between condoning cruelty because of the sport, and finding sport in the cruelty itself. There have been many protests in Spain itself against the practice of bull-fighting, from the gentle Isabella, Ferdinand's wife, to the good queen-regent Christina. Juana, my cook, my pearl, whom I will mention later on, refused indignantly permission to attend a bull-fight; but, on the other hand, Doña Julia, my teacher of Spanish, who claims noble origin, but is starving in an attic in quite imaginary gentility, lowered her pride so far as to ask a well-to-do patron the loan of a penny, the sum necessary to complete the purchase of a ticket for her son. "The lady," said Doña Julia, who told me the story herself,

"was most kind. 'There is not the slightest difficulty about the loan with you. Everybody knows Doña Julia'—and she offered to lend me a real (2½d.) I told her, however," she continued proudly, "one penny is sufficient. Doña Julia is not a beggar." The humble penny in this district is called by the picturesque name of "perro gordo" (big male dog); the halfpenny goes by the name of "perra chica" (little female dog).

But returning again to bull-fighting, the first idea that presents itself to the mind of an Englishman is the cruelty to the horses. He pictures to himself Persimmon or Sceptre being torn to pieces by the savage horns of an infuriated bull, and denounces the sport accordingly. This is hardly fair. In the old chivalrous days gentlemen of rank entered the arena, mounted on the best steeds money could procure, and did their utmost when attacking the bull to preserve their horses from mutilation. Nowadays the most wretched specimens of horse-flesh that have just escaped the knacker's yard are spurred to meet the charging bull by picadors of the lowest class, whose chief object is to present their horses' flanks as an easy target for the bull's horns, while taking every care to save their own limbs, encased for greater security in armour, leather wadding, and every kind of artificial protection. The horses are doomed in advance even with greater certainty than the bull. The chief horror of the show to a humane spectator is this shed-

ding of blood. No animal, human or otherwise, remains indifferent at the sight of blood. It either sickens, terrifies, or excites. Alas! in Spain it sometimes creates laughter. "Que cola!" you hear a spectator say with a laugh as the tail of the poor bull is raised aloft and quivers in the death-throes. A phenomenon that struck me as detracting somewhat of sympathy from the horse in a bull-fight is its curious impassivity. Some scientists aver that the sensibility to pain in the case of a horse is ten times that of a man. Soldiers have often said that the shrieks of a horse on the battlefield are agonising. Lower animals than the horse—the pig, the duck, to say nothing of the dog—will rend the air with shrieks if in pain. But the horse, standing in the bull-ring, with its side torn by the cruel horns of the bull, and its entrails trailing on the ground, makes no sound. I think if the horses could be given a hint to raise appalling shrieks consistent with the atrocities they undergo, the end of bull-fighting would be appreciably nearer. But the Spaniards as a race are not cruel. They have warm passions and feelings of tender refinement. They are devoted to children and flowers. Little children will stop you in the street and beg for a flower from your button-hole. Spanish ladies are fond of animals. One of them (but she was half-French) told me she kept a ladybird for a whole year. She put a drop of water on a plate,

tapped with her finger, and the ladybird came like a dog and lapped the pearly stream. One day it escaped through a chink in the matting to a neighbouring flower-pot, but was lured back by the tapping of the lady's finger on the plate. However, the months that passed so lightly over the lady's head proved too much for the insect, and one day it was found dead in its primeval forest of moss, quite white with age.

Curious cases of cruelty combined with love of animals are to be found in Spain. The following anecdote will illustrate this. In one of the large *ganados*, or bull-pastures where the animals are carefully trained for the bull-ring, a young man named José, or Pépé as he is always called for short, had the special guardianship and training of a certain very likely young bull. This occupation is not unattended with danger, for the keeper has often to spend his afternoon literally up a tree to escape the attention of his charges. Owing to Pépé's kindness and attention the young bull under his care became so tame and docile as to be treated as a domestic pet,—so tame indeed that his owner, thinking he had not pluck enough to fight, and fearing the fiasco that would ensue in the bull-ring, passed him over again and again in favour of his more ferocious brethren. This rejoiced Pépé's heart, as he began to think that his favourite would never be taken away, and redoubled his care and attention. The time came at last when, the supply of

bulls being short, the owner had to send up Pépé's bull in spite of his meek reputation. Pépé wept passionately to see his favourite go; but, like a true Spaniard, spent most of his little savings in journeying up to the place where the bull-fight was to be held, in order to be present at the entertainment which must inevitably involve the massacre of his *protégé*. To the surprise of every one, the bull, though tame and docile under the influence of Pépé, had a warrior's heart within him. Once in the arena, and face to face with death, he fought with such courage and dexterity that a very rare thing happened. They granted the bull his life for his courage, and the myriad voices that shrieked for his death now shouted the louder for his life. The team of mules with their gay trappings and jingling bells, which always comes galloping in to drag out the carcass of the dead bull, saw only their expected burden weak and wounded, but just able to stagger to his feet, crowned with flowers, the idol of a whole city. Then sun-burnt Pépé, from his hot seat among the "gods," frantic with joy at the triumph of his favourite, fought his way down through the seats, and though all hands were stretched out to stop him, leaped over the barrier into the arena and ran towards the bull, calling him by his name.

It looked like certain death. The bull, though weak and wounded, was nearly mad with fury, heat, and thirst, and

smarting from many a wound from the *banderillas*. All looked on in horror at what was to come, and many ladies covered their eyes with their fans so as not to see the impending tragedy. But the brave bull was true and faithful as he was bold. In spite of the blinding sun-dazzle, in spite of the smart of the spear-thrusts, above the noise, and the screams, and the shouting, he recognised the voice of his friend, and staggered forward to lick the hand of him who had fed him. The frenzied scene that followed this touching episode of fidelity can only be imagined by those who know the real chivalry of a Spanish heart, and the mad excitement of a Spanish crowd that welcomes and applauds some conspicuous act of courage in the bull-ring.

But other bulls, other manners. In every bull-ring there is a double barrier between the arena and the spectators. The first, about six feet high, is of stout woodwork, and can easily be negotiated by the bull. The second, much higher, is chiefly a stout open palisade-work, through which are poked sticks, umbrellas, fans, and even knives (so they say) at the unfortunate animal, should he be so rash as to leap over the first barrier. Between the two runs a corridor, closed by a gate kept carefully shut, leading to the stone stairs that give access to the seats. One day in Malaga a bull, bored at length with playing continuous pin-cushion, easily leaped the first barrier,

and finding the gate at the end of the corridor open, thought he would see what a bull-ring looked like from the point of view of a spectator. He proceeded to mount the staircase, and if he had really appeared among the seat-holders, the panic that would have ensued would have been appalling. But in an instant an uproar arose. Gendarmes and armed carabineers guarded the top of the staircase with drawn sword and loaded rifle, while a mob of *aficionados* beat, pinched, poked, and howled at the animal from behind. It all ended in smoke. The few bullets that accompanied the smoke found their outlet among the *aficionados*. Several, it was said, were killed, but the bull escaped (the irony of the word!) back to the arena, and met his death in the usual manner. But of the stories of bulls there is no end—stories of wild bulls, tame bulls, clever bulls, stupid bulls, stories of escaped bulls doing havoc in a crowded street, and even of bulls charging the wounded passengers at a railway accident.

Every one of the lower classes is an *aficionado*, or, as we might translate it, "sportsman," though strictly applied to bulls. In the heart of every urchin in Spain there lies a lurking ambition to rise one day to the height of an *espada*. *Espada*, please, not matador, still less (*pase* Carmen) toreador. The last word is, I believe, Portuguese, and means little more than *torero*, any man who is occupied with the profession of bull-fighting,

and has as much relation to an *espada* as a common ostler to a king's coachman. But an *espada*, if successful, is very much higher than a king's coachman. He has a popularity that might arise in England, say, from a combination of Jean de Reske, Baden-Powell, and Prince Ranjitsinhji, with a touch of Lord Charles Beresford and "Tod" Sloan thrown in. Children copy him, great ladies make love to him, everybody talks about him. He sees himself in every photographic shop, he reads about himself in every newspaper. Fans, match-boxes, and wine-bottles are proud to bear his effigy. Paragraphists call him by pet names, and he even reaches the dignity of caricature. His income runs sometimes to many thousands a-year. Bull-fighters have a reputation for extravagance, and one hears stories of their taking baths of champagne, lighting cigarettes with 100-franc notes, and melting gold candlesticks to astonish their friends with their opulence. Wild stories of women and wine, however, must be received with caution by those who know the sort of life a man must live who requires the utmost perfection of eye, nerve, and muscle to protect him daily from a horrible death. His training is long, expensive, and irksome, in addition to the danger. He must scorn delights and live laborious days, and, in addition to great dexterity, must be a man of infinite resource at critical moments. When Montes, the famous *espada*, had to face Paquerito, the famous bull, the animal seemed so tame that

the people cried indignantly, "Turn him out!" But Montes, with unerring instinct and knowledge of bull character, cried, "All get to the barrier!" and at that instant the bull, like a flash of lightning, charged head down across the arena, then made for the horses, tossing them with such fury and power that the picadors refused to fight again. Montes said, "I will kill the bull on one condition, that if I fail in my first stroke the public must have patience and wait till I change my clothes, for I should never get near him again." He killed the bull, however, with the first stroke, his arm being black and blue with the violent effort. The bull's horn had just touched him under the armpit. The most masterly *coup* of the *espada* is to kill the bull without shedding a drop of blood.

There is no doubt that the so-called sport is so distasteful to an Englishman that many are years in the country without going to a *corrida*. They seem not to remember that in by-gone days in England a still more cruel form of sport—viz., bear-baiting—was not only permitted but popular. In Godwin's *Life of Chaucer* we read, "Cruel as these sports [bear-baiting] were, in which the animal assailed, being staked to the ground, was often mangled in the most terrible manner or had his tongue torn out by the roots without awakening the conductors of the diversion to clemency, and in which the dogs were sometimes hewed

limb from limb to prove the soundness of the breed, they [the sports] continued to obtain," &c. Again, the author of 'Hudibras' is inclined to treat a taste for bear-baiting as the token of a frank disposition and a loyal temper. Queen Elizabeth herself displayed a singular partiality for bull-baiting and bear-baiting. But this was in the days when England was "Merrie." Englishwomen of the present day express their horror of bull-fighting in stronger terms than their male friends. One of them, however, hesitating, said, "I should not so much mind if they were cows instead of the poor bulls." She was thinking of the red-and-white creatures that had often "given her fits" in her own Worcestershire meadows. "Why don't they have cow-fights instead of bull-fights?" "Madam," was the reply, "they do have cow-fights sometimes." But there is no man (and here an analogy might be drawn to make an Ibsenite play) who would not ten times rather face a bull than a cow. The reason is not far to seek. When a bull charges he does so with his eyes shut, and consequently many a time misses his stroke, and batters his head uselessly against the wooden barrier. But the wily cow keeps her eyes open. So when she does make a charge she rarely misses her mark. But in spite of the disgust that is raised in the minds of an Englishman or Englishwoman by the actual fighting and shedding of blood in the arena, there is much

connected with bull-fighting that may be of innocent interest even to the most ardent patroness of our Dumb Friends' League. For instance, there is the driving of the bulls into the special stables attached to the arena, the night before the *corrida* takes place.

You are sitting in a palm-fringed garden overlooking the road along which the bulls are to come. The night is fine, moonless but not dark. White hands have been straying over the mandoline evoking the weirdest of sounds, a soft southern voice has been singing folk-songs and songs of ancient loves. There is scarce a breeze. All is perfect peace. Suddenly there is a cry, "The bulls! the bulls!" and you all rush down the steps to the bottom of the garden to listen to a shuffling smothered sound of tired feet drawing near. The bulls are at hand. The lamps are put out, but the moon is now showing. There is plenty of light. Then come two civil guards. Then shouts and yells are heard. Then there is a rush of trampling hoofs, a cloud of dust, and they have passed. Once or twice as they go by there is the low sound of a moan. It seems to say to us, secure behind our wall of brick, "Ave foresteros, Morituri tesalutant." The guardians have brought them quietly to within a quarter of a mile of the *encierro*, and then they begin to hustle them. They are led by tame bulls, who have a bell round their neck. When all the fighting bulls are in the *en-*

cierra, the tame bulls edge towards the door, and are cautiously let out, the others being left prisoners. If one of the wild bulls tries to get out, the tame bulls drive him back with their horns. They come by road at night, and move in a certain order. First a man on horseback on each side a tame bull, the rear brought up by three more tame bulls. In addition are two tame bulls to each wild one. There are men on horseback with spears and men on foot. During the day they stop in some farm or place in the mountains, and continue their march at night. Tame bulls always surround the wild ones, so that the latter are always in the middle. The tame ones go at the wild ones with their horns if they try to escape. The wild ones never retaliate, the reason being that when young they are so bullied if they retaliate, that when grown up they have a wholesome dread of their tame conductors.

The next day is the fight, and you will have taken care to provide yourself and your lady companion with tickets for seats in the shade. You had better be punctual. A bull-fight is the only occasion punctuality is observed in Spain. It is better to be beforehand if you want to enjoy the gathering of the spectators before the arrival of the *alcalde* or president of the show. You rejoice that you are in the shade, it must be so hot over there in the sun on the dazzling white marble steps. The whole auditorium is like a gay par-

terre of flowers; you can hardly see a head—it is all coloured fans and fluttering handkerchiefs. Meanwhile the lower-class spectators are not the least amusing. They scream, they chatter, they eat the fruit of unknown trees, the one side in the shade chaff unmercifully the other side in the sun. Let us hope your lady companion does not understand Spanish. A man offers a newspaper for sale, and you are furious to find it is a week old. It is not meant to read, but for the lady to sit down on. All is good nature; and now the *alcalde* arrives. If he is popular, there is enthusiasm at the sight of him. If not, it is amusing to see the people gesticulating at him and screaming not the choicest of epithets at his unheeding head. Then out from the dark *toril* or den behind which the bull is waiting comes the *cuadrilla* or company of bull-fighters. They slowly march up the arena, their chief bows low to the president, who drops down a key for him to catch. Lucky man if he catches it, for he is rewarded by an ounce of bullion, value three pounds. The *toril* is unlocked, the doors are flung open, all eyes are fixed upon the dark spot. For a moment you are reminded of the well-known pictures of the Coliseum where the jailer is throwing open the doors and wakes the sleeping Christians. But the dark spot is still there. In the gloom lies the bull, and all know it. Will he come out, or will he sulk and spoil their sport? He

comes out. Here he is! sometimes slowly, sometimes at a gallop. When he finds himself in the arena he pauses and looks round. The noise and the light daze him for a moment. Then he catches sight of something moving, and with head down he charges at it full pelt. That first mad rush across the arena is worth all the rest. It is magnificent. When you have seen it let your lady companion turn and fly. If she stops she will be assisting at a crime which will haunt her for days.

Some have said of a bullfight that what is not beastly is beastly dull. I certainly did not find it dull at all. One is so enthusiastically on the side of the bull. The horses, that usually excite the most pity, rouse in me less sympathy than the bull. They are old, they are ending a life of toil and misery, they do not see the danger coming. Their death is horribly revolting (some persons turn sick and leave the place), but it is generally a matter of a few moments. But the bull. He is in the flower of youth and strength. He is not a noisome beast like a snake or a scorpion. He does not delight in human flesh like a tiger or a crocodile. He is only young and strong and fierce, and they are going to torture him to death. Two days ago he was roaming on the plains of Seville glorying in his young strength. Now he has been lured into a trap by a tame bull (a craven race), he has been kept in the dark for hours, all through the night

without water, though his food has been salted. At length the door is opened. He rushes to the blessed light. He is blinded for a moment with the unaccustomed glare and the roar of strange voices. He stops and paws the ground. Then at the far end of the arena he catches sight of what seem a score of gaudy flies, an easy prey. Then that mad rush I spoke of before, worth all the rest besides. But the painted flies are men, and they each leap over the barrier out of his reach in a moment, and a sensation of irritating red and baffled fury is all that is left. Then he catches sight of a wretched horse that stands blindfolded and motionless against the barrier. Again a rush and a crash, as horse and rider are tossed over his neck. There is a sickening sight of mangled remains. Turn away. The men escape unhurt—they are thickly padded for protection. Often the bull, distracted, leaps the first barrier, the civil guards fly like rabbits, but the public, secure behind the second barrier, beat him with sticks. A man in front of me has snatched the *banderilla* from the bull's shoulder and gloats over it, bloody as it is. At the same time, with a movement that is half involuntary, with a grin he draws aside his jacket and shows to those around him a long sharp knife. I cannot help thinking, in some night of revolutionary horror, where there is murder and death in every street, what will be the doings of a man like this. There are six horses dead in the

arena, in every corner there is a shapeless horrible mass, but the people cry, "Caballos! mas caballos!" ("Horses! more horses!") and two more victims are soon added to the list.

The *banderilla* business you think simply cruel. You cannot understand what art there may be. You only see the maddened beast dashing about with barbed darts sticking into his quivering flesh. Then comes the *espada's* turn. I am glad he is so good-looking. They might have hissed him if he wasn't. There was quite a demonstration one day against an *espada* who, though a fine man, had certainly an unprepossessing face. They hissed and screamed, "Que feo! que barbaridad! es imposible!" ("What a fright! it's monstrous! it ought not to be allowed!") But this *espada* leaves nothing to be desired on the score of good looks, and he is trying to make a speech to the *alcalde*, which is cut short by the too close neighbourhood of the bull. And then ensues the only part of a bull-fight that may be dignified by the name of sport. The bull and his adversary are equally matched, in spite of the difference of their bulk. The animal's size and strength is matched against the man's nerve and dexterity. The man is in deadly peril. He has only a sword and a cape in his hand to defend him from the infuriated beast. But with the utmost calm he sits upon a chair before the bull. He kneels before him, he takes him by the horn and tail, and plays with the wild animal as a

cat with a mouse. Then at the psychological moment he gives one deadly thrust, always in front, as he plunges his sword into the vital spot on the bull's neck. If skilfully done it is all over with the bull. The greatest *coup* is to kill with one stroke. This is rarely seen, however, and usually it is but one more torture for the bull, who springs wildly about with the sword in his body and the blood streaming from the wound. If the *espada* is not very successful, or the bull is long in dying though brought to his knees, there steals up behind the prostrate animal a man with a steel instrument, and deals the hero an assassin blow that kills him. The bull falls forward. He consents to die. He is no more a bull but only beef. In come the mules with their jingling bells. The dead bull is dragged out of sight like a traitor, as well as the carcasses of the horses. Out of sight out of mind. The sand is raked, and then it begins all over again, till as many as seven bulls are killed in one day. The ear of the bull is given to the successful *espada*. The rest is cut up and sold for those who like to buy.

The entrance of the mules is a pretty sight, and it is a pity your lady companion should have missed it. Now, too, begins some of the fun of the fair, as the death of the bull gives the signal for an outburst of enthusiasm on the part of the *aficionados*. Some of them ere this have been trying to make themselves conspicuous. At the moment when

the bull was about to issue from the *toril* a man is suddenly seen dancing before the aperture waving his arm, defying the bull. He has no right there—he is hustled away ignominiously. Another in the very thick of the contest between the *espada* and the bull rushes across the arena, screaming and begging to be allowed to kill the bull. He is immediately suppressed. A third man is seen beating the bull when he is dead. But the enthusiasm of the mass of *aficionados* is only at its height at the death of the bull. It is an extraordinary scene. Hats, coats, cigars, shawls, and watches are thrown down into the arena, apparently as gifts to the *espada*, who bows profusely, and throws back the hats if he recognises the owners. Even benches are thrown in, but these are difficult to throw back. Meanwhile the lady spectators are not idle. Their gifts are more costly. Fans, purses with money, watches are thrown to the hero. One woman tears the diamond ear-rings from her ears, wraps them in a lace handkerchief, and hands them down. One woman in her excitement divests herself of her petticoat and follows suit. It is all very amusing, but more a subject for a caricaturist than a moralist. Better this sight than in the old days of the Coliseum, when

the vestals craned their withered necks over the balustrade to give the signal for the death of some splendid athlete,—those cruel feelings, as some aver, being engendered by a feeling of hatred to all maledom in revenge for their own onerous virginity. But other countries, other manners. One has no right to find fault with the likes and dislikes of other people. For a foreigner to censure the customs and ideas of another nation is the greatest impertinence. Still I must confess to a certain feeling of self-complacency as I contrasted the bloody tragedy in the arena, its sea of dark faces, and the shouting, "Horses! more horses to the slaughter!" with the scene on a summer's afternoon at Lord's cricket-ground, and ten thousand Englishmen applauding a catch at point.

One might moralise for some time on this theme: perhaps one cannot do better than imitate the high moral tone that, combined with an intimate knowledge of the country he describes, is such a conspicuous feature of the London correspondent of the 'Resumen.' "How different are we in Spain!" he writes; "how degrading it is to see English ladies at a racecourse consorting with jockeys!" &c. You see it is the point of view that makes the difference.

CHILDREN OF TEMPEST.¹

A TALE OF THE OUTER ISLES.

BY NEIL MUNRO.

CHAPTER XIII.—OVER TO BOISDALE.

"FATHER LUDOVICK has been asking for you over in Boisdale," Col said some weeks after, to keep himself right with all the possible circumstances, but never a word of Father Ludovick's sister, still supposed to be upon her mainland travels.

"I hope the good man is well?" said Duncan. "I had the thought once or twice to go over, but the intention may stand till slacker times. You will give him my remembrances when you see him next, and my excuses. If there's anything in the tale of the ninety-and-nine, he'll think more of the lost sheep Col as a casual visitor than if I called myself on him once a-week."

"You will please yourself on that score," said Col. "It is of no account to the lost sheep."

Duncan, who always felt the whip himself in any innuendo about his past, begged his brother's pardon quickly.

"No offence, I assure you," said his brother, "none in the world! If it was lost sheep we had to discourse on over at Boisdale, the most notorious would be yourself. I, for one, was never within the four walls of their clerical fank in France."

"Neither you were, Col, neither you were!"

"And that puts me in mind of a thing," Col went on. "Do you know who brought you back from Paris?"

Duncan reddened. "I could say with truth that I did not," he said, "but I'll admit I have had my own suspicions that Father Ludovick himself was at the back of that. Mother said as much. She once told me that when father was near his end he sent for the Boisdale priest. They talked long and they talked late, and the outcome was that I was taken home. That I came willingly, because I felt all along I was unsuited for a priest, has nothing to do with it. I came home."

"And here you are!"

"And here I am, as you say, Col. From that day till this I have never been able to learn the reason; indeed, to tell the truth, I have always been a little afraid it was one that I would be happier not to know."

"A priest's reason like enough," said Col, thinking deeply, "and of little account among ordinary men."

"Anyhow, here's a sheep

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that has escaped the shearing, and not very sorry for it. If Father Ludovick it was that advised my recall, I feel he had his own sufficient reasons. Once I would have given a good deal, from natural curiosity, to know them; now I keep out of his way, from a feeling that there might be some displeasure in their discovery. Do you follow me, Col? The chapter's closed. It's a wise man that takes things as they come without too much inquiry, if they turn out in the end to his advantage. But how did you come to think of the priest in that connection?"

"We were talking of father—the priest and I, last Wednesday—and the legacy left to him and the crazy schemes he spent it on, and the priest sat without a word, and damned uncomfortable, I assure you, by the look of him, till I mentioned your name, and said it was a pity for all your years in the college wasted. He let the thing drop to me unawares there. 'On my advising,' said he; 'he came back on my advising; it was the least that could be done,' and no more than that, but shut up like an oyster, with his face pretty red and a look at his sister."

"Miss Anna!" cried Duncan. "You did not tell me she was back."

Col's face became indifferent. "Did I not?" said he. "I could swear I did, but it does not matter; she came back at Christmas."

"Faith, then, I wish you had said so sooner, and I would have

had a jaunt to Boisdale. What do you think of her?"

"Oh!—I'm no judge," said Coll. "If it was a quey, now, or a filly——"

"You're a clever man, Col," said Duncan, laughing, "but now and then, in some things, I'm thinking I could give you lessons."

Duncan went over to Boisdale for St Brigid's Day in February, when the men of the Outer Isles start the long-line fishing on the banks, when the raven begins to build, and the larks get their new voices. The early morning had been frosty, but now it was wonderfully bland; the sea was calm—the air so clear he could see the Monach Isles twenty miles away in banks of purple on the blue, and the rocks of them grey in the sun.

The fisher of the Uists begins no enterprise but in the spirit of prayer, nor rises at morn nor sleeps at night, nor kindles cruse light nor smothers an evening fire, without some invocation of the saints. When he sees the sun at morning break, gorgeous, through the sea, he takes the bonnet from his head and feels again the early awe before Columba.

On St Brigid's Day the fishermen went to chapel and heard their priest exhort them to ways of justice and peace in all their traffic on the deep. When Duncan came first in sight of Stella Maris, he could see the men, with Mass over, clustered near the quays casting lots for their places on the fishing-banks—themselves boisterous like the sea itself. On the

southern wall of the chapel was a seat where old men gathered, guessing at the possibilities of the opening season. For them the wave no more, nor the pull on hard-rimed oar, nor the swelter at the line. They looked out on the old friend—the old enemy—lying there so crafty hiding her thoughts, and tried their ancient skill to find the darting gannet against the dazzle of the east. They would have been contending at the quays too, and not here at the chapel's gable, were it not that it is unlucky for the young to meet the old when the young are going a-fishing. Seven of them sat with their humps to the wall, and gallantly feigned a satisfaction with their fate.

"We are lucky to be out of it, brave lads, and our fortune made before the trade was done," said one, whose fortune was six sons that wrought for him. "There has not been a notable fishing, my grief! since the year of the yellow snow. At the best of it I was always thinking the long lines no gentleman's occupation. The cod and conger—they are the churls of the sea, daundering around in singles like the raven of the land: give me the herring of the summer-time, that moves from place to place in jolly bands, and is a king's fish, and was never caught by the greed of its guts with lob or cockle, but went to his death, like the great Macleans, in noble armies. Long lines! long lines! to the Worst with them!—give me the nets at her, bow to back, and the brine of the curing-barrels."

"It was very well in its time, but nowadays too many of the curing-barrels belong to Corodale Col, and the bounty and the price he pays for the oran are hardly worth a God-fearing man wetting his boots or putting his breath in a net-bow for," said another little red man, like a gurnet at the gills and the nose of him. "They're calling him the New Man, my heroes; but the New Man's as close in the claws as the old smuggler."

"I'm not so sure about the old smuggler," said another; "Col's brand is still on the ankers of the *Happy Return*, and I hear he's often across at the Sergeant's inn at Creggans. It was never the morning bitters brought Corodale there."

"Well, he's here at Mass often enough, and makes plenty of profession," said the gurnet.

"Here at Mass and friendly with Master Ludovick; but, 'illean, have you seen him bungle at the holy water? I take it for a sign. The New Man! faith! who gave him the name but Dark John that thinks so much of his life saved on St Michael's, he would throw it away for Col—in any manner but drowning. By the Book! and there's his brother Duncan himself."

Duncan passed with a smile and the word of day for the oldsters at the gable-end; stood for a little apart from the fishermen, loudly bickering over the luck of their drawing, and went to the jetty where women were passing the vials of holy water into the dens of the skiffs. Father Ludovick stood on the slip and beamed

in the lovable banter of his flock.

"You rogue!" said he to Duncan, "where have you been for a hundred thousand years? Am I a leper, Corodale Og? Or has the tale gone about the islands that Father Ludovick's Spanish wine is sour? At least a twelvemonth back from—at least a twelvemonth home, and all I have seen of you was a phantom on a wild morning on the long ford, when I was too demented to make much of the opportunity."

"I have been so busy," said Duncan.

"It is the worst of fevers; I hope it is not catching. Your brother Col was not so busy but what he could find time to be civil and give us a call occasionally. Let me warn you that you'll have a cold reception from Anna on the head of your neglect. There was a good deal of Mr Duncan in her conversation before she went to Edinburgh, but now that she's come back to find that very throng gentleman has never looked the road her poor brother was on, all the time of her absence, but left his neighbourly courtesies to Col—h'm! well let me tell you, sir, it is a different tale with her. You will go up to the house at once and make your own explanations and apologies; and what is more, I cannot just now go with you for a backing, for here I'm at a duty that cannot be left. Go up and have something to eat and drink—if her ladyship will forgive you enough to be hospitable—and I'll follow by-and-by. But let me tell you again, sir,

you compare but poorly with Col."

"Was it ever otherwise," said Duncan, laughing. "For that you must blame nature and not myself, that is a poor creature and does the best he can."

He went up to the house with but a dim conception of her presence or of her mind. He had seen her white and cold and disarranged, her thoughts all flying, and that sufficiency that is the finest gift of woman altogether wanting. It was indeed to meet one that was still a stranger to him he left Father Ludovick her brother.

No sign of life was round the priest's house except the smoke of its chimneys; but when he came close he heard a woman singing in a voice so full of thinking and of soothing that he could have listened for ever. For a while he stood on the sole-sod of the porch with his hands on the jambs indulging himself, and made out the air of a Gaelic lullaby. It had the fondness of maternity, conveyed that wonderful confidence that sets children startled at the terror of the world, asleep; it made him young, it made him happy. Reluctant he rapped at the open door. The singer was too fully possessed by her song and did not hear, nor hear indeed when he rapped again, so he stepped within the porch, intending to try the inner door.

But the inner door, too, was open, and showed him a curious spectacle. Anna sat with the side of her face to him, knitting, and while she made the needles flash she rocked a wicker cradle

with her foot and sang. "O Bride!" she sang—

"O Bride, Brideag, come with the
wand
To this wintry land;
And breathe with the breath of the
Spring so bland,
Bride, Bride, the little Bride!"

She was dressed like one that had been at an assembly, in a deep-tucked gown of white, short-waisted in a recent fashion, a green sash round it, a fillet of green staying the tumult of her hair, where nestled a spray of the primrose that blooms on the isles when the rest of the world is barren. He stood astounded at her occupation, at her beauty, and felt some sudden flush of soul that never before had been in his experience. She seemed the very spirit of all he thought of when he thought upon maternity—something lush and happy like the summer fields. A madness touched him for a second that she was his own, and he, the tired householder, come home.

"Duncan!" she cried with the freedom that the Hebrid Isles are happy in, when she turned and saw him. "Duncan!" said she, her face on fire with pleasure or surprise, and came with outstretched hands—an action so spontaneous and so much in harmony with his thoughts that he was almost swept away on his delusion.

"You have come at last," said she, "and of course with your old luck you must be finding me at a disadvantage."

"I declare, Miss Anna," said Duncan, "that I could not find you better engaged. The baby

and you must pardon me for spoiling the song."

"The baby!" cried Anna, and seeing he was in earnest, laughed outright. "Bonny on the baby! come and see our Brideag!" She tilted over the wicker cradle and let him see it held only a sheaf of corn, ornamented with flowers, and shells, and ribbons. "Have you been so long in France," she asked, still laughing at his confusion on this discovery, "that you have forgotten the little Bride? Ludovick must be always laughing at my play-acting, but even himself he is fond of the old diversions and ceremonies, and lets me lead the girls in procession on Brigid's eve. We made her yesterday—look, Corodale! is she not the darling now? and so good-humoured to be of my quarrelsome sex. Twelve of us in white took her round the townships, and the others took her here this morning and bedded her, with all the luck that is with her, in the house of Father Ludovick. Aren't we droll? Now, if you laugh at us——"

She searched him for a sign of contempt, but this was the last humour he could have found amusement in.

"Miss Anna," said he, "I am not laughing."

"Well, you can be if you like, then," she said. "I give you liberty—though, if you had laughed without my permission, I would have been much offended. Of course a man must think me daft to be rocking the little Brideag; it was so childish. Just like—just like the little girl you

came to on the Trialabreck island? I quite forgot, and at my knitting, my feet went to the rocker without thinking, and the song of 'Crodh Chailin' came to my lips without any idea of what I sang."

"Indeed, and where better could the song be than there?" asked Duncan, twinkling, with his eyes on her lips till she bit the under one as if it had been stung.

"O my young man, my good young man, you must be kept in your place like the rest of your family!" thought Anna.

"Gallantry seems to run in the blood of the Corodale folk," she told him. "I can only say 'Thanks.' And now that you have found me at my doll—that some of us are fond of in our hearts till we are well matured, let me tell you—and have again an advantage over me, I must ask for your excuse for paying no attention to our invitations that we sent to you by Mr Col."

"Father Ludovick warned me of a cold reception," said Duncan, cheerfully. "What excuse can I make but that far is the cry to Corodale, as the saying goes in Lorn, and that Col is so busy with a hundred notable ventures abroad, it takes me all my time to look after the trivial ones at home."

"Your brother was most considerate, in spite of all his engagements. He did much to cheer Ludovick in my absence. And let me tell you, Mr Duncan, I'm fair in love with him—though, to be sure,

it's a thing I would not care to have mentioned to himself, lest it should add to the conceit of him, that is not very small already."

Duncan felt for a second a new and curious pang. The thing was said in sport, he knew; but yet, could anything have been more natural?

"It's the first good luck he has had, then, in the twelve-month he and I have worked together," said he, not too seriously. "And who better deserves it? As brave as a lion——"

"Oh! you are very complacent and agreeable. There are as brave——" said Anna, contrairy, looking at him, and remembering the night in Trialabreck.

"As handsome as a prince——"

"And who knows it better than himself? But that is a matter of taste."

"As honest as the day!"

"H'm! who is denying it? Mr Duncan, it looks to me as if you had plenty of practice at pleading for a brother who is very well able to look after himself, I assure you. And now that I think of it, I declare I could never love a man quite so perfect as this you are describing to me. I take back my word—as a woman is quite at liberty, surely, to do when the mood comes to her—and I make it 'like' instead of love."

"*L'amitié, c'est l'amour sans ailes*," said Duncan, and Anna laughed.

"Without wings, indeed; and that minds me, Mr Duncan,

that I am a goose to be so frivolous. It comes of this little Brideag," and, reddening again at the sight of the cradle and its occupant, that she had been discovered so ludicrously playing with, she

caught it up and thrust it into an inner room.

"There!" said she — "the last of my dolls! And because you must laugh at me, I'll be the very sedate woman all the rest of the day."

CHAPTER XIV.—TIR-AN-OIG.

Duncan felt that he talked as a man dances when it is a happy night with him, every fibre of the flesh of him in a compact, and soul as well as body part of the dancing tune. When Ludovick joined them—the tall man, with eyes half-shut and twitching at the under-lids as the eyes of mariners do that constantly look on sun-struck seas—he found the sinner forgiven and the pair on a footing of drollery. It had been so between her and Col, but even Ludovick could feel that here was something of a difference,—that in Anna, this time, was no reserve. For a little, a cloud came over him—some dim breath of doubting, of regret, for what, he knew not, as he looked at them. For the first time in all his knowledge Anna was out of his world, and farther off, he felt, than when the waves of the Minch and the dreary miles of the mainland and the darkness sundered them. And Duncan—so elate, so sure—what in the world had come to this recluse from Corodale that in his brother's report was for usual so engrossed in the material affairs of the world, on herds, and crops,

and correspondence? If love was an ailment that seized on one at sight as the solan on the saithe-fish, and not a thing that grew about the heart in years as the lichen creeps on rock, as his affections had grown about Anna, he would have thought that this stranger had in an hour, by some magic, got into such a surety of comprehension and possession as he himself enjoyed.

At noon the boats set out for the fishing-banks upon a sea blue beyond comparison. It would gladden the most indifferent eye, as sunsets do, that in their grandeur have a message and a hope that man at the end of all may not be for the maggot, that he may be cheerful, that he should be brave. Duncan felt it—saw it—heard it—in the rolling deeps; he knew to-day in the very bones of him that the world was magnificent and all well, he felt every dreary hour in Corodale, every doubt that came from his strained position there, uplifted on the cold clean washing waves that rose in the bay and struck the steadfast rock. And Anna walked beside him—he hoped she shared in these delightful influences.

Father Ludovick busied him-

self amongst his children, coming from his abstractions to haul laughingly on tack and hal-yard, with "There you are, Master Ludovick! is it not the splendid fisherman was spoiled in you when they made you into a clerk?" from bantering fishermen, stout junks so thickly clad in home-spun wool that when they laughed it was like trees in hurricanes. They asked him what of the weather, though there might be none of them that had not skill elsewhere than in the presence of this magician Lord of the Isles to know without an error what the sky told, the shoulder of Benmore, and the birds: he glanced neither to the right nor to the left, up nor down, but promised at once a night of calm and three tides more of it.

Children gathered round Anna, brown like the winter brackens or the young leaves of the early oak, laughing in a chorus for no reason that was visible, the luckiest that were nearest burying their heads in her gown, convulsed with happiness; and she laughed too, in a ripple of hilly brooks on mossy green stones, with the spirit of Spring in tiny woods,—not the great and brooding where dwell reflections and remorse—*not* loudly at all, as if the joy were something out of herself, but as if the secret of content was in her bosom. The women, come to see their men off, laughed too, bewitched, infected by herself—the darling! Oh, surely to-day there was no care in little Uist of the

sheld: ; rly this was Tir-an-~~ug~~ — ~~the~~ land of the eternal young. No more nights of storm for Uist; no more rain nor cold, hunger nor mist, sorrow nor farewell. "Come back, come back, little scamps, little heroes, and do not vex the lady!" cried the mothers, but did not mean it in the least, loving to see their children there, knowing there was but one joy between them all—the joy of the Spring—that Brigid's white wand had touched them all, the innocents! and opened their inward eyes to the gardens of Tir-an-oig.

The sun made the sands pure gold, dazzling beside the blue of the sea; the far-off islands seemed to hang in the heavens. From the houses along the bay, once mean and dark, now by the magic of Bride made sweet and simple and clean as garden hives, the smoke of peats came blowing to the shore, not only the scents of buried grass and shrub and of all the ancient summers, but the incense of domestic gods—*glastaig* and brownie and dwarf—that had sat for generations round the hearths.

"Come away, come away, little rogues, and let the lady be," said the mothers—hypocrites! "No, no," she cried, and put her arms about as many as she could, bent over them—Bride herself, pure white, with the primrose in her bosom—and in a sweet fury shared her lips among them as they fought for her favours. Some strands of her hair were

drawn from her temples, and beat about their mouths as they ravished her caresses: they knew a perfume that they had never perceived before, that pleased them wonderfully—the smell of birchen leaves from mainland woods, that brides in the Outer Isles make use of for the bathing of their hair in Spring.

“Come with us for luck,” cried a lad on the last skiff, leaning, all aslope, his weight on the oar he thrust with from the beach, his face like that of the olden Lochlanners who handsomely scourged the isles when heroes moved about the world in galleys, his figure strong and tense.

“Oh well would I like it, Magnus,” cried Anna, her face bright at the notion; “but I have the pots and pans.”

“Well, lady,” cried the fellow, so handsome and bold, “say three times ‘Luck to you,’ and we’ll come back in the morning up to the gunnel.”

“Good luck! good luck! good luck!” cried Anna, and kissed her hand.

“O Christ!” said the fellow under his breath, in all devotion to the others of his company, “look at yon, and I so ignorant and poor!”

Duncan felt an aimless yearning: the world of itself was perfect, but something within himself was incomplete.

“We might take a little boat and follow them out of the bay,” said he.

“And I never thought of it!” said Anna. “Ludovick, will you come out to the point on the little *Ron*?” she cried. But

Ludovick had affairs in chapel, and asked to be excused, so the little boat went out with Duncan and Anna alone at her stern, blown under a fanning breeze that was like a sigh, in the wake of the skiffs departing with their brown sails softly flapping and their sweeps splashing the blue. He held the sheet, she sat beside him, close against his arm, for the *Ron* was heavenly narrow. The odour of the birch-leaves was between them: he swooned in some wood of France, or in some mainland garden as the boat nodded on the sea, scarce moving through it. If this was not Tir-an-oig, if this was not the land of eternal youth and honeymoon, Tir-an-oig was there before them—Barra with the beads of pearly islets round it, Orosay and Fiaray and Fuday. A bird’s song suddenly rose from the bay behind them—the confession of the linnet, bird of Bride, sounding passionate after the shrill of the sandpiper, the sea-swallow’s cry. Over their shoulders the isle they left was flooded with the sun, and every hill and hollow was majestic. The skiffs stretched out before them, and suddenly the fishermen sang. They put their bodies to the oars and their spirits into an *iorram* of the ancient unperplexed old days, singing in unison as men do that ride on horses upon serious affairs, or as did the Lochlan kings. It rose, the boat-song, as if the sea itself thought it and must tell its great desire; and hearing it, Anna murmured a counter so sweet and mellow that it made

the *Ron* as it were the sole possessor of the song.

Duncan looked at the swell of her throat and the surge of her breasts where the primrose lay, and felt again that yearning aimless and serene. A thousand times had come to him in happy hours a brief conviction that between him and bliss's very climax something less tangible than a web of gossamer lay; but how to break through these bounds, that were on trial more durable than ramparts of stone! Now the sense of it was in every artery; his heart, he felt, was tangled in her hair, though he never had the thought in words but in a shiver of the being. He saw that she was what he once had thought the world was—in its morning, before the curst sophistications. The boat-song floated over the sea, the linnet piped on land, the waters were blue to very ecstasy—the very heaven itself—and in the heavens they floated free from the influence of the clod.

She had been looking before her into the west, out to the far horizon, as if her thoughts were there, content in all her being, her eyes half closed on the dazzle of the waves, her lips scarcely parted as she sang her counter to the seamen's air.

"What are you thinking of?" he asked her.

"I did not think at all, I was so happy," said she, with her eyes still on the sea-edge. "But now that you have made me think, I think—I hope—oh, I hope I shall never be forlorn," and suddenly she glanced about her—at the pearly isles of Barra

Sound, at the land behind them basking in the sun. A tear came to her eyes, the wellings of that strange chagrin that comes on all the sensitive who know that beauty is so brief.

"Forlorn!" said Duncan, passionate. "Whoever can be moved by days and scenes like these can never be for long forlorn;" and then of a sudden there came to him, as he saw the curve of her neck, the throb of her bosom, the conviction that the world without her would indeed be desolate. Now he knew the gossamer web that lay between him and the complete surrender of the soaring lark, the unalterable contentment of stars for ever inseparable,—it was that they were apart. And yet—in that perfume of the birch-woods, hearing the distant song of those men labouring at the oars, there was another thought and baffling, that she was sweeter not in his possession. He loved her—and yet he knew that she was better wild and free.

Anna turned to him and saw his eyes, so strange, and guessed why she was happy. Her own she cast down for a moment in confusion, wondering and mute; then, "I think we must go back," said she.

"We can never go back," said Duncan, putting about the boat and heading for land; "we have gone too far from the old dull place for that. Tir-an-oig, Tir-an-oig, who comes back from Tir-an-oig?"

She did not ask him what he meant, but sat now silent, the faintest flush on her coun-

tenance. Over Uist the people were dispersed; Stella Maris stood grey-white on its pinnacle above the land, constant in this world of changing fancies, exceedingly earnest, certain, and austere. To its south they saw Ludovick rising on the brae, his tall figure bent against the

furrows of a little field beyond his dwelling. When he reached the summit he stood dark against the sky. He stood a moment there, and turned and looked across the islands and over the sea, the genius of the place, a figure lonely beyond expression.

CHAPTER XV.—A MESSENGER.

The old men who sat at the gable-end, lazy-content to the marrow, nudged each other when a man passed at a distance who had not a fortune of sons at work for him, and though elderly was not so very old, yet was not with his neighbours that went a-fishing. Michaelmas Day had brought Dark John to the boundary-walls of valour, as they said in Uist, though he was the last himself who would have owned to it. From that on, he had, more than ever he had before, a horror of the deep, so that the thickest plank in his boat seemed under his feet like paper, and a heel of a half-inch in a puff of wind made him gasp like one that slid into perdition. Ailments and omens he made much of after that—no pretext too scurvy to keep him from the hazards of the open Sounds; and he caught the fish he lived on mainly in fresh waters or in the sheltered bays of the east in calm weather, where he went spearing flounders in the pools after the women already had had their pick of them and had gone home. He fancied he kept his secret cunningly, but

there was neither man nor wife in Uist who did not understand.

To-day he waited till the long-line men were gone, and now came down with a lobster-creel to his skiff, that had, like himself, been salved from a grave in the sands of Kintra. Father Ludovick, a little way off, standing on the hill-top, sweeping the world with his glances, feeling benign with all his happy flock, gave him a wave of the hand as one of God's own creatures, and pitied him in spite of a repugnance. John touched his cap to the priest, uneasy, for this was a person who knew all things, even before they came to the confessional. He shuffled on his way more slowly, for some women stood on the quay-head exchanging scandal in the shelter of their new spring shawls, and seemingly in the key for some diversion now that the men were gone. He would have fled from an encounter but for the knowledge that the old men at the chapel-wall watched him, and that the women themselves were fit for any escapade that might discomfort him.

"Here comes the *gioltair*—here comes the poltroon," said one of them, half in pity, half in contempt, and all of them turned about with interest, and unfriendly, for might their own husbands not some day come to this—their husbands and their sons, that dared the wildest weather, and were out at night in the welter of the Minch when this wretch snored sluggardly and snug at home?

"There you go, John!" cried the boldest of them—the virgin who carded wool on Michaelmas night. "You are late, just man; put a pace on you, and if you do not catch the head of the fish, you will maybe get the tail."

"Good day to you, dames," said John, most blandly. "*Oh righ!* and isn't this the weather?" and cast a flattering glance at the sunny hollows of the island, at the gold sand and the cordial sea.

"You could not have it calmer if you were the witch of Mull herself, and had, just man, the making of it," said the spinster, her bosom swelling with satisfaction that she should be blessed with such an opportunity. She had had a lover once: he had been drowned.

"I am going out to the Stallion rock just for a little pot of lobsters," said he, throwing his creel into the boat with much pretence at manly bustling.

"A fierce, fierce fish the lobster, John," said the spinster; "you must watch, courageous man, that you are not bitten," and the other women laughed.

"Daughters of she-dogs!" said John to himself and scratched his neck, then thrust some shreds of dulce seaweed in his mouth from a store he always kept in his waistcoat pocket. He was ever a man that feared and hated the creatures that eagerly hunt for man and live in petticoats: this gathering of the pack gave him a sort of terror, but he put the best face he could on it. "Ladies," said he, "I will not be detaining you," and made to pass, but not this way was Bell Vore the virgin to lose her opportunity.

"There would be more money at the fish than at the lobsters," said she, hugging her blubbery self in her plaid with the greatest satisfaction. "You should be with the men, Dark John."

"My end! my hope! my loss and my losing! there, good dame, would I be for certain but for the fact that I drew but a notable barren bit of bank for my portion, and it was not worth the going to," said Dark John, who never swithered at a lie.

"Och! the devil, now waan't that unlucky?" said the spinster. "It would be a bit too far out now, I'll wager?"

"And I would never have put an oar to it this day of days in any case, for the first I clapped eyes on in the morning when I set my foot over the sole-sod of the door was a red-haired woman. Red-haired women are good for love (as they say) but poor for fortune, pleasant dame, and are the worst of omens for men that

are starting on the day's exploits. I did not venture forth till I thought the road was clear, and here, on my word! was a Dalvoolin red-haired woman sitting with a pack of her husband's sails on the road before me. I would as soon have met the Worst One himself and he in his red wrath."

"O John, John!" cried the woman, "but you are sore on us poor creatures. Is there not, now, between yourself and me and the creel you are carrying, one woman among all the kindly girls of Uist you could be thinking of in an evening or counting lucky to meet at the start of a day's fishing?"

"I would be gaily telling you that, Bell Vore, my darling," said he, with a crafty smirk that was laughable, "if there was but yourself, and these other ladies were not listening." The other women laughed at this and made off, leaving the pair of them, and at that Dark John got some of his courage. He chewed his dulse with relish, and felt that now he was on equal terms with his enemy.

"There's but the one woman in all Isle Uist," said he, "I would consider lucky for me to meet of a morning and I on my way to the banks."

"Who might she be, honest man?" said the spinster, who had never abandoned hope.

"Who but Herself? Many a time I'll be sending a boy out of the house before me in the morning to see if Miss Anna is on the road, and if she is, I run out and past her, and I'm the stout fellow then for the fishing."

"Then you have not been seeing her much since Michaelmas?" said the spinster sourly, "for you and the banks since then have been strangers. And Herself is in demand to-day, for look!—she is out at the fishing on her own account, and I'll swear she has made her shot, and found a spot and haled him," and she pointed to the *Ron* drifting in the lee of little Oronsay.

"*Mo chreach!* now, do you tell me?" said Dark John sharply. "Who is with her?"

"The stuck priest from Corodale," said Bell Vore.

He stared at the boat, dumfounded, forgetting at once the virgin and her mockery, swearing mutteringly to himself in the words that Gaelic borrows from the Gall, then, fired as it seemed by some sudden decision, threw his creel into the boat, turned his back on the woman with a sentence of excuse, and hurried over the quay cobbles to the shore. He rose on the brae, determined; skirted the vacant gable of Our Lady Star, following the road north with long sliding steps that never took his shoe-soles from the gravel, his mind turbulent and his eyes with no engagement, so that he walked without seeing anything for an hour, and turned Dalveen and its broken walls to come face to face with Col.

"Here's a man in a hurry," cried Col. "The like of this I have not seen in leisuredly Uist since the Norway bark was wrecked on Fioray, and everyone wanted timber for building of byres."

had heard the tale over and over again, and ever with a growing fascination.

"As much as I could make any use of," said Dark John, quite cheerfully. "But for a fellow of enterprise, now—for a true gentleman of parts with the art of spending — *oh right!* hark!—"

He stamped his foot on the ground and jingled his pence again, with the most amazing look of cunning and regard for Col of Corodale.

Col knew it was but two-pence in a dirty palm, but heard the clang of fortune in that coppery pretence—heard the creak of halyards throwing out the sails in his own great fleet of sloops, the clatter of his own horses and cattle trotting to Lowland markets, heard bells in towns, and felt the rapture of command. He put out his hand and caught the old man by the shoulder, grasping cruelly.

"You rotten — you rotten wizard!" he cried, half in anger at this deception, half in the agony of desire; "what's this, and what's the use of talking? We cannot be digging up the whole of the Isle of Uist."

Dark John looked at him and turned dulse in his cheek, satisfied.

"Your brother Duncan," said

he, "is like to find what he wants without much digging," and turned his gaze away from a shrewd rude delicacy.

"Then let him," said Col; "it's the luck of the elder born," and felt exceeding bitter with his fate.

John chinked his paltry two-pence again, and drew closer to speak low, as if some other listened. "I know a stuff," he said, "foxglove, butter-burr, nine stems of fern, three bones from a man's grave and him ancient, all cindered, and thrown against the north wind at her——"

Corodale snapped his fingers with contempt.

"Charms! If charms availed, then my father himself would have found the naked gold, for many a time he tried them. I have something surer than charms."

He put his arm through John's, and in a red heat of invention filled his ear. The old man listened, now and then nodding his head and trembling with excitement.

"I'm the man who can do it," said he, when he had heard all; "no one better. I know! I know! love will close a thousand eyes and waken ten thousand jealousies."

Col went back to Corodale, and Dark John went home.

(To be continued.)

you always," said Dark John. "But one of them made so bold as to say what I myself took the liberty of thinking, and wished it had been yourself instead of Duncan."

"By the Book! and I'll have none of my affairs cackled over by Boisdale hens!" cried Col, furious to have his worst fears so confirmed. "And who put this pair together but yourself, with your fool's notion of sending my brother to her uncle's funeral! Not that it matters much to me."

John chewed dulse and rubbed his hands together till they seemed to creak. "It was the last thing I would be thinking of, Master Col—the very last," said he. "For yourself I went, as you know, and for no other, and for a reason you were clever enough to guess, but you were not there when I reached Corodale, and your brother got the start of you, though I did my best, and put him wrong by a tide."

"He's a tide ahead of me still," said Col, but that was to himself. To the messenger he presented, with an inward struggle, a face untroubled, and protested again that it mattered little.

"It matters twenty thousand pounds—the whole of the stuff from Arkaig," said the other, with a face uplifted. "On my soul, and on the life of me, oh king! there's twenty thousand tarnishing somewhere within halloo of us. By the Book! I have but to stamp my heel, and you will hear the money jingling. Put your ear to it, Corodale, Corodale!" He stamped

violently on the road where he stood. Isle Uist, in the calm and clarity of the air, appeared to shudder, and Col, so mastered was he by five months' dreaming of the stuff talked about, plainly heard the tinkle of gold, enormous stores of it, blind and caverned in the moss of Uist, crying to come out and be merry again among men. He looked down at Dark John's hand, and saw that the old rogue had done the trick with twopence in his palm.

"The Arkaig treasure," he said with an effort—"an old wife's tale! It was known to Ossian and the Finne. I could never credit that it had existence except in lies told on winter nights round *ceilidh* fires."

"I have told you before that I have seen it," said John. "I was at the freight of it from Arisaig in my grandfather's generation."

"Were you, faith! I clean forgot," said Col. "How did the history go, just man?"

"We carried fulmar-oil from Mingulay to Arisaig in the lugger of old Colin - Calum-Angus, and there was with us Dermosary, on a purpose we could make no guess at till he had the yellow on board. Oh, the devil! 'twas the sight that was there when a box burst! I have not seen a woman's gathering of cockles more plenteous on the beach than yon was. A man might count himself rich all the rest of his life if he lived to a hundred, if he got but the one look of it."

"The look was all you got of it, anyway," said Col, who

had heard the tale over and over again, and ever with a growing fascination.

"As much as I could make any use of," said Dark John, quite cheerfully. "But for a fellow of enterprise, now—for a true gentleman of parts with the art of spending — *oh right!* hark! —"

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Col went back to Corodale, and Dark John went home.

(*To be continued.*)

A POLICY FOR IRELAND.

BY AMHAS.

IN order to determine on a policy for Ireland, it is necessary to understand what is the matter with the country; and to understand this it is necessary to know the truth, which is not to be gathered either from partisan statements made in public speeches, or from the mischievous misrepresentations of newspapers, or from the impressions of correspondents paying a flying visit to the West. One of the great causes of trouble between Great Britain and Ireland lies in the widespread ignorance of the British public; nor has the Press done much to help to a better knowledge. In one of the illustrated papers there appeared, a few months ago, a picture which represented an attack by moonlighters on an Irish country house. Not only was this picture out of date, since no such attacks were then, or are now, being made on such houses; but the picture itself was evidence of the ignorance of the artist who was responsible for this entirely fanciful production. For the moonlighters were represented as wearing the old Irish dress, with knee-breeches, swallow-tail coat, and caubeen hat,—a dress which is practically extinct in the country,—and as being armed with ancient horse-pistols such as can no longer be found. It is strange that such a picture should be pub-

lished as though representing facts of the present century; and the harm that is done and bitter feeling that is roused by newspaper misrepresentation cannot be too much deplored.

There is at present no prevalence of crime or violence in Ireland. There is agitation, much of which is lawful, though it degenerates in places into intimidation and tyranny, which is unlawful. There has perhaps been more violence in Wales due to strikes, or in Belfast or even in England to religious riots, than any due to the meetings of the United Irish League. The agitation is no doubt fostered by professional politicians for their own purposes; but such politicians would be powerless if there were not a genuine feeling, on the part of the poorer and more ignorant classes, on which they are able to trade. The redress of a few real grievances, which are by no means widely felt, will do more to put an end to such agitation than any measures of police or of coercion. The League is by no means generally popular or strongly supported, and a very little concession to real public opinion would now suffice to cut the ground from under it.

There is, no doubt, a wide spirit of sympathy with the poor of Ireland to be found in all classes of the British public, and a great anxiety lest, by

following the lines of compulsion, we may gradually drift back to the old conditions of the "bad times," which it was hoped could never recur after so much had been done to meet any reasonable wishes of the Irish. But the present quarrel is not one between England and Ireland; it is a purely internal conflict, in which Irishmen are arrayed against one another. It is not a question of Home Rule, which, by general consent, has at least been postponed in presence of more pressing questions. For Ireland practically now rules itself, the whole executive, from the Chief Secretary downwards, being Irish. It possesses local self-government by county councils; and its grievances against the Imperial Parliament in London are not in any way different to those that may be felt in Scotland or in Wales. A further devolution of routine and local questions to some provincial authority may be desired in Britain as well as in Ireland; but this is not the practical question which agitates the Irish peasantry at the present moment.

The political question, then, is that of the land settlement in Ireland; and to this question the agitation is at present confined. The agricultural tenants desire to possess freehold land, and to till it for their own benefit. Nor is the desire unlawful or prejudicial to the State, so long as they are willing to pay a fair price for such land, and are sincerely intending to put it to the best uses. The object of a

policy for Ireland is, consequently, the settlement of the land question; for if that could be reached the present need for coercion would disappear with the natural death of the United Irish League. Agitation would cease,—at least for a time,—and if the settlement was wise, and based on realities, the discontent of Ireland might be allayed.

Many papers have appeared in 'Maga' during the last three years which have given truthful accounts of the social conditions that really exist in the country, and which should have enabled readers better to understand what is desired, and what is needed. The forecast as to "Land Purchase," made two years ago, has been fully justified by the course of events.¹ No true statesman can desire to take a side in Irish quarrels, the aim of government being quite unchanged since the days of Plato, and its duty still being to see that every man minds his own business and does no injury to his neighbour. Mr Wyndham is no doubt quite right in saying that a settlement cannot be made by Government alone. It must depend, if it is to be satisfactory, on the free assent of parties concerned. But Irishmen find it difficult, or even impossible, to agree together. They are, on the other hand, always willing to accept the decision of a disinterested judge, when once they are convinced that the decision is quite independent, just, and uninfluenced

¹ 'Maga,' February 1901, pp. 271-278.

by any leaning to one side or the other. Thus a Government that will hear both sides, and deal out an impartial finding, should not experience any insuperable obstacle. It is only when political parties are suspected of endeavouring to obtain unfair advantages, and of furthering class or sectarian interests, that they become powerless for good.

The great fault of most estimates of the situation, and of the proposed remedies, lies in their being far too vague and general. What is needed before anything else is accurate information and the consideration of concrete cases. To speak of Ireland as containing two camps—Protestant and Catholic, or landlord and tenant—is only to present a very crude generalisation. For the difficulty lies in the many parties and conflicting interests which distract the nation, and which render it so difficult for the statesman to keep a clear head and to discover the root of the evil. For there are at least two varieties of every party. There are Roman Catholics who are violent Leaguers, and priests who are chairmen of its local branches; and there are Roman Catholics—like the Bishop of Elphin—who regard the League with disfavour, and who discountenance the Nationalist party in Parliament. There are Protestants who are zealous for the Union and for the present system of “dual ownership” in land. There are other Protestants whose Unionism is lukewarm, because they are fascinated by

Mr Russell’s scheme of Land Purchase—though the number of these is probably not increasing. There are Nationalists who desire to see the quarrel brought to the arbitrament of force; but there are others who desire that it should be settled by the law or by arbitration. There are tenants who are rapacious and unscrupulous, hating landlords, and desiring to see them driven out of the country. But there are also many tenants who are contented, and on good terms with the landlords, and who, though forced by public opinion to stand by their own class, would yet hail with satisfaction the disappearance of the League and the calming down of agitation. Finally, there are landlords who are prejudiced and short-sighted, hating the peasantry and intent on abolishing the legal rents, seeking to recover their ancient powers and immunities. But there are also highly educated and patriotic landlords, who, for generations, have dealt honestly and kindly with their tenants, and in whose mouths the bitterness of contempt, or the despondency of defeat, never gives birth to foolish and irritating accusations.

It is between all these conflicting sects, parties, and interests that the Government of the country is practically asked to arbitrate: there is no one party that is strong enough to get its own way; and there are few men who are sufficiently independent and clear-sighted to be able to avoid taking a side in the quarrel. The whole

question is one of land settlement, in which conflicting interests are at war. The attempt to settle this question by direct Government regulation has resulted in what is called "dual ownership"—that is to say, a condition in which the landlord is not a landlord, and the tenant is not a tenant at all. Neither can move without the Land Court; and the business of the court is so large, and its organisation is so expensive, that it is practically becoming unworkable. These conditions are not good for the land in Ireland, or for any class in the country. It is felt that some new arrangement is required; and there is certainly a large central party of moderate men who desire to see the question fairly settled, but who are entirely without organisation or power of action, unless led and guided by statesmen. Thus we see at one time, side by side in Ireland, a timocracy, a democracy, and a tyranny, each striving for mastery, and not succeeding each other as constitutions according to the Platonic theory. To these we must also add a powerful hierocracy—the influence of the Roman Church—as an important element, though the Church is no longer entirely united in its aims or direction concerning the burning question of the day.

If the interests concerned be thus more numerous than is generally supposed, it is not unnatural that the remedies proposed should equally suffer from the vague generalities on which they are based. There are three such proposed remedies, besides

the ancient remedy of force opposing violence. There is the proposal for Land Purchase, universal and compulsory. There is the proposal for conciliation by joint consultation and arbitration between the landlord and the tenant parties. There is, finally, the principle of the latest Land Bill, which aims at aiding the two parties to come to terms. For various reasons neither of these proposed remedies finds general approval in the country; yet none is without some argument in its favour. The question which it is now proposed to consider, after pointing out the difficulties which render the three proposed remedies inefficient, is whether, keeping in view the actualities of the situation which underlie each of the proposals, there does not exist a true way to reach the end, which is the abatement of discontent, and the establishment of a just and reasonable arrangement. From each proposal there is something of value to be gathered, and each therefore requires consideration.

The plea for compulsory sale of land by all landlords in Ireland is that the present dual ownership has become unworkable, and that the arrangement meets a public want. But compulsory sale presumably means compulsory purchase, equally universal, and both will evidently lead to injustice in individual cases. It is known that in some cases the tenant is unwilling to purchase, even though enabled to do so by Government loan. He is to be compelled, it appears, to buy

whether he wishes or no. The scheme, moreover, would merely in the end substitute one class of landlords for another, and the new class would probably have fewer outside resources or less independent capital than the old. For if a man is to purchase without conditions he must clearly be able legally to under-let, subdivide, or mortgage his property as he wills. In the course of a few years, therefore, the weak owners would be dispossessed by the stronger and more thrifty, or by the mortgagees, who would usually be the village shopkeeper. It is well known that the hardest masters of tenants or labourers—as compared with the families who have long held the land—are to be found in this class. The scheme as a whole is therefore neither for the benefit of landlord nor of tenant, nor would it do away with the difficulty of dual ownership unless the Land Court be abolished and the new owners left free to fix rents, which proceeding would soon revive all the ancient discontent due to rack-renting. All that we can find useful in the suggestion is the evidence that there is a very strong desire on the part of a large number of tenants to become freehold owners, with the object of cultivating the land for their own benefit, and with the advantage that the land would be put to its highest use, to the benefit of the State. To squander £100,000,000 of public money in order to get rid of the present owners would be an evident waste of funds with no

final result. It has not even the advantage, from a Roman Catholic point of view, of substituting Romanist for Protestant landlords, since Protestant tenants could not be excluded as purchasers.

The complaints made by those who advocate such compulsory measures against the Land Courts are instructive, inasmuch as they show a considerable congestion of work, both in the fixing of rents and in the settlement of purchase cases, where landlord and tenant combine to ask the court to declare a fair price for purchase. It is evident that, instead of its being possible to place a yet larger question of purchase before this Commission, it is desirable that it should somehow be relieved of overwork, and enabled to devote itself to the question of fair rent. The rents are now so reduced that it is often not possible for the tenant to ask for a further revision, since any benefit would be swallowed up by the expense of the application. We thus learn that, in order to facilitate transfer of land, it is necessary that it should be undertaken by a new organisation, and that it should be made much cheaper than at present. Moreover, that if it is intended thereby to establish a class of yeomen or peasant proprietors, it will be necessary that certain conditions should be made with the new owners not contemplated in the crude popular scheme; since otherwise some form of dual ownership, or of tenancy, would at once reappear.

Nothing can sound better than the suggestion that the question should be settled by free agreement between the parties concerned, after consultation together on the basis of the abolition of dual ownership.

But even if we leave out of account the extreme men on either side,—the landlords who only desire to increase the capital value of land, and the tenants who hope to get land for nothing, not to speak of those who may be personally interested in keeping up the agitation,—it remains a sad fact that any conference, attended by more moderate men on either side, would probably in the end arrive at no generally acceptable decision. Especially would such decision be impossible if some general rule were proposed for the whole country; because the conditions that might be suitable for one part of Ireland would be a source of injustice in others.

Hence it would seem that the question is reduced to the best means whereby the Government, as an independent arbitrator, may be enabled to step in once more to decide between all the conflicting interests. This is what lay at the root of the Land Bill brought forward by the present Chief Secretary, and at first this appeared to be acceptable to all parties alike. What, then, is the real reason why it is now opposed? It contemplates no compulsory sale or purchase, but only the good offices of Government to enable the parties to come

together in a voluntary agreement. In this respect it stands above artificial suggestions of State Socialism, which would only lead to the repetition of the most unsatisfactory features of the old attempts to regulate the contracts between landlord and tenant which have resulted in a generally unpopular dual ownership.

The real difficulties are due to suspicion and to expense and delay. It was represented in connection with this Land Bill that there were cases where landlords and tenants could not reach an agreement because a few tenants refused to come into the arrangement, and because of personal jealousies and quarrels; but that if an estate were sold by the landlord to the Crown it would be much easier for a Government department, which was independent of all such prejudices, to arrange for the subsequent sale of the property to the tenants. Considering the length to which Irish peasants may be led rather than incur odium by resisting the general wishes of their own class, it certainly seems remarkable that such cases should prove to be insuperable obstacles. But it is no doubt true that the landlord would prefer to sell to Government, and the tenants probably would prefer to deal with Government officials as to purchase in most cases. It is also certainly unfair that a landlord should have to sell to his best tenants, and have those who are most troublesome and dishonest left on his hands. The proposal in the

bill was therefore likely to be useful; but the fatal objection lay in the clause which provided that, when purchase was in contemplation, the Land Court should in such cases not proceed with any further revision of rent. This was—no doubt ignorantly—regarded by the peasantry as an attempt to upset the principle of fixing fair rents through the court, and in detail the provisions were thought to be intended to punish obstruction by tenants. No doubt the real reason for the clause was that if a large number of purchase cases came into court it would be quite impossible for the Land Commission to struggle with the arrears of work which are already piling up under present conditions. It has become clear, nevertheless, that the bill cannot pass by general consent as long as suspicions are roused by such a clause. The principle must therefore be embodied in some other form which will not give rise to objection, and which will not saddle the Land Courts with an impossible amount of work. If all purchase cases were removed from the courts, and they were to confine themselves entirely to the fixation of rent, the congestion would be abated, and the arrears would soon be worked off.

It should be recognised that there are five different classes of relation between landlord and tenant in connection with land purchase, and out of these there is only one class that appears urgently to need any new legislation.

First, there is the case where the landlord and the tenants alike are content with existing conditions and desire no change. In this case it is evidently unnecessary that they should be disturbed by Government. They are free to remain as they are, since no one is harmed; and Government has no need, and no right, to interfere any more than in cases where single tenants desire to buy their holdings and the landlord agrees to sell.

Secondly, there is the case where the landlord wishes to sell to the tenants, and they are all willing to buy. In this case Government again need not interfere. If the two parties cannot agree to a price, it is already law that they can call on the Land Courts to fix it for them. The only objection lies in the fact that this appeal is costly, and causes delay; but this may not be altogether a disadvantage, as it makes free agreement more probable. It might, however, be better to make the transfer cheaper, and even to fix a rate—say of twenty years' purchase based on current rents—as the legal price in all cases. Anyhow, many such sales have of late occurred in Ireland, and the tenants have given from eighteen to twenty-two years' purchase on the legal rents.

Thirdly, there is the case when both parties are agreed, and when the tenants require help towards the purchase-money. This also is provided for by existing law; and it is admitted that the tenants have carried out their engagements

with wonderful regularity, the instalments being repaid when due in nearly all cases. Here again no further change appears necessary, unless it be to simplify and cheapen the process, by giving a cheap legal title to the tenants. In America they know that land can be bought and sold without any of the legal expenses entailed at home. In Ireland the Ordnance Survey maps are legal evidence of area and of boundary. The decision of the Land Court is evidence of the legal rent; and it would seem therefore that all that is necessary to constitute a title—supposing that of the seller to be accepted as sound when based on five years of possession—is a copy of the map and of the decision as to rent, a simple form of agreement between the parties, and a legal title from Government, which should cost nothing but the stamp.

Fourthly, there is the case where a landlord desires to sell the whole or part of his estate, and where the tenants do not desire to buy. In this case the landlord is, and should continue to be, free to sell to any purchaser at the best price he can get, whether the purchaser be a stranger or one of the tenants.

Fifthly, remains the case which alone requires special consideration—namely, when the tenants are able and anxious to purchase their holdings, or to purchase other land, or other land in addition to their holdings, but where the landlord refuses to sell, or demands, either from the tenants or from the Government, an ex-

orbitant price. In this case it is again necessary to know the reasons for refusal. It may be that the landlord would be ruined by the sale; and, on the other hand, it may be that he is selfish and greedy, and that the purchase is an absolute need of existence to the peasants. No general rule can be laid down, and evidence is needed in each individual case. Thus—as has been before explained in ‘Maga’—an estate may be so charged that, while the landlord can pay, and have an income left, as long as he gets five per cent (out of rents) as the interest on the value of his land, he would have no income after the sale, since, as a trustee, he would be obliged to invest the capital needed to meet charges at less than three per cent. No one can blame a landlord who declines to sell under these conditions. But, taking the opposite case, where a rich landlord lets out land to grazing tenants who are not included in the class with which the Land Courts deal, but have yearly agreements under which the owner can charge any rent he likes,—it is often well known that such land was formerly used for agriculture, and that it is capable of being put to a better use than grazing. It is evident that the landlord does not need it himself for his own operations in stock-raising, on which much of his income might depend, because he has let it to a class of tenants specially hated by the agricultural peasantry, and regarded as blacklegs. Nearly all the boy-

cotting in Ireland at the present day is caused by the feeling of the peasantry against these grazing tenants. The regular tenants in such cases (especially in Connemara) are holding each only three or four acres, and are each paying less than £5 annual rent. In old days they were thrust out into the bogs, which they were obliged to reclaim, and on such holdings they were then charged an unfair rent. They are unable to live on their holdings, as the soil is poor, rocky, or swampy, and unfit for agriculture. They have indeed been much helped in some parts by the recent action of the Congested Districts Board, but in other instances the lands lie beyond the districts scheduled as congested. It is felt as a real grievance that men, eager to buy better land in Ireland near their homes, should be unable to obtain the superfluous grazing grounds hard by, and that the landlord should put up the price after the manner of a Yankee trust. It is for the benefit of the State that the land should be put to the highest use of which it is capable, and that the agriculturists should remain in Ireland, and not further decrease the population by the emigration of the most energetic and thrifty among the tillers of the soil. Here, then, and here alone, it would seem that compulsion might be justified in the general interest of the State.

For it must be admitted that compulsory sale of land is a recognised mode of procedure in all cases where it is needful for

the general good. The War Office constantly expropriates owners, with only a very moderate compensation, when land is needed for national defence. Parliament compels sale of land to railway companies; and, generally speaking, there is nothing novel or unjust in compulsory sale when the State requires land for new purposes. Hence, in the two instances given above, the poor landlord might be compelled to sell if it was recognised that he could fairly claim a sum which, when invested in such securities as a trustee can hold, would continue to yield him the same income that he now has; while, on the other hand, the rich landlord who has grazing tenants ought to be more than satisfied if, when he is compelled to sell such land as is actually needed by the poor who are crowded in the bogs, he is compensated by receiving—from Government—the difference between the value of such land under grass, and that of ordinary agricultural land in the district. The utmost that landlords are now asking is thirty years' purchase on the existing rents.

The whole land question, considered in detail, is thus fined down to the necessity of legislation in this fifth case; and the policy required in Ireland is reduced to a question which would probably prove to be one covering only a small area of country, and requiring a very moderate expenditure of money by the public. But before this can be definitely asserted it is necessary to have very definite

information. Some inquirers may consider that all that is actually needed is to give compulsory powers, in certain cases, to the Congested Districts Board. But this would not suffice to solve the question, or to allay agitation. For this Board, admirable as has been its administration, and popular as it is with the lower classes in districts where it works, is not a body resting on popular election, nor does its operation extend over the whole country. Many cases may therefore occur where the Board could have no authority to act; while, on the other hand, it is necessary that the representatives of the people should be known to have a fair share in any inquiry, or action, contemplated in connection with compulsory sale of land.

First, then, it would seem desirable that a small Government Committee should be formed, quite independent of any existing Court or Board, to report on cases where the tenants desired to buy land, and the owner refused to sell, after inquiry into the reasons why such purchase was desired, and why it could not be made. The members of the Committee need have no special knowledge of the value of land. The Land Commission could furnish them with all information wanted. They need only be men of just and independent character; and the qualifications needed in a stipendiary magistrate are the only ones required. They should equally, in numbers, represent the landlords and the tenants, and might be elected

by the two classes, or by the Deputy Lieutenants of the Counties, and by the County Councils, respectively. The President of the Committee should belong to neither class. He should be neither an Irish landlord nor an Irish tenant; and both parties would probably be found to prefer that he should be a Scottish or an English gentleman.

Until such a Committee has been appointed further legislation is undesirable, because it cannot be founded on any public inquiry satisfactory to all, and because there is no certain knowledge, on the part of the public, as to the number of cases that require legislation, or the parts of Ireland in which they occur. But it might fairly be expected that, while such inquiry was being publicly made on application by the aggrieved parties, agitation would be suspended until it was known what legislation would be, in consequence, proposed to Parliament.

There is, however, another reason for the existence of the United Irish League in some districts, and for the intimidation which the peasant members of that League exert on others of their own class. For the League is not attacking landlords directly, but is coercing the grazing tenants, and others who are accused of land-grabbing from their own relations, and from poor neighbours of the same class with themselves. This reason lies in family quarrels as to the holdings. A tenant regards his interest in the land — often

representing a sum larger than the capitalised rent—as property that he can bequeath, and many frauds and jealousies result. If it were laid down that such holdings, and the freeholds that may be constituted hereafter, are to be assigned by the occupier in all cases to the next-of-kin, or if some other arrangement were made by which the succession was no longer allowed to remain in doubt at the will of the owner, then the main strength of the League would be sapped; because peasants join the local branches, in so many cases, in order to coerce their own relations regarding the inheritance of tenant interest in the land. So fierce is the struggle indeed, that this interest has been forced up to a sum which represents a heavy burden on any small farmer who desires to purchase a tenant's goodwill; while great injustice is often done by the present occupiers, who refuse to decide between the claims of sons, or falsely state their intentions in order to make good marriages for them.

Let us suppose that the Committee finally reported that, for a reasonable expenditure, it would be possible to buy out certain obstructive landlords by means of compulsory sale, and to compensate others who were willing, but who were unable, to sell, on account of the loss of income that would result. The next step would obviously be to pass a short Act, carrying out the recommendations of the Committee as amended in Parliament, and thus to create a

class of yeomen or peasant proprietors, holding, perhaps, on an average about twenty acres each of arable land, with their existing rights of turbary, and such rights concerning game as may be determined. But such freeholds should be granted by a cheap valid title, and also under certain conditions, making it impossible that they could again be converted into a single large property by any holder, or mortgagee, or outside purchaser.

For this reason it should be stipulated that no freeholder of the new freeholds can acquire any of those which are contiguous to his own. He should have free right of sale; but it would be necessary to guard against any one buying, or any mortgagee foreclosing, on any group of contiguous holdings, and thus creating a property of larger extent. Nor should the holder be allowed to subdivide, or sublet, without permission of Government, just as a tenant is not allowed to cut up his holding in any properly conducted estate. Finally, the succession to the freehold should be made clear by law, in order to prevent fraud, or false representation, on the part of the owner, and family feuds leading to intimidation and to the tyranny of peasant leagues.

The policy for Ireland thus seems clear. The burning question is Land Purchase. It can be settled by agreement in the large majority of cases. It is only in the few that compulsory sale, and fair compensation, are required; and a just inquiry into these cases may fairly be

expected to calm the agitation, and to render alike unnecessary and impossible both the proclamation of counties under the Coercion Act and the League, which now gives occasion for such an abnormal mode of government.

Since the above was written and printed, the conference between certain landlords and Nationalist representatives in Dublin has issued its conclusions. The document is a useful expression of Irish opinion; but it is rather of the nature of a political manifesto than a serious examination of the question. We are told that the tenants are willing to pay twenty years' purchase, but that landlords ought to receive thirty years' purchase. The British taxpayer is invited to make up the difference. But the inducements held out to him are of the most trivial and insufficient nature; and it may be safely predicted that he will require much more

complete information on the subject. For so vague are the ideas of cost that they are variously estimated at from twenty to eighty millions. Landlord and tenant agree in asking money from Great Britain; but they do not say how much they want, or how it is to be raised. This only confirms the conclusion that detailed examination of the facts is needed. As to the result of peasant proprietorship, the landlords consider that it would be a failure. But we should study what has been done in Denmark during the last century: for a country in which two-thirds of the population depend on agriculture has become highly prosperous, the land being possessed by thrifty and well-educated yeomen owners, representing a third of the population. The only doubt is whether, under like conditions, the Irish yeoman would develop a like character and a like prosperity.

A SIDE-ISSUE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'ON THE HEELS OF DE WET.'

A HEAVY autumn mist hung over the kloof, the fleecy vaporous cloud showing partiality to the deeper levels. Great arms and offshoots from it clung indecisively to the mountain-sides, reflecting as deathly white the silver wallow of the dying moon. In the treacherous semilight the kloof appeared like some deep crater of volcanic origin; the mist within, in its sheeny whiteness, might well have been dread sulphurous vapour generated in the bowels of the earth. The hour—it was well past midnight—added to the uncanny feeling bred of chilly and uncertain night. As it topped the lip of the kloof, the head of the dismounted column instinctively came to a standstill, and the squadron leader motioned the tame Burgher to his side.

"This is the top of the nek—where is the farm? I can see nothing through this haze!"

The tame Burgher leaned over until his mouth was close against the officer's ear, and whispered, "It is all right—the farm is just at the bottom of the path before us. It is easy to surround it now!"

Still dissatisfied, the squadron leader beckoned to the Intelligence officer, and instituted for the fifth time that night a searching inquiry into the antecedents of the guide. The assurance was again satisfactory, and resulted in a forward

move. Like ghosts the shadowy figures of forty men passed between the boulders which capped the pass, and disappeared down the hillside. Not altogether in silence, for no matter the circumstances, forty men scrambling down an uncertain path upon a pitch-dark night must cause some noise. Iron-shod boots slip and clang against the fellow-metal of the granite. And when the barrel of a rifle is so cold that it seems to burn the hand, butts will strike protruding rocks, or clatter, as involuntarily a slipping man struggles to resecure his foothold. The misery of those night-marches! The biting cold of the veldt-bred breeze,—a cold which neither coat, "warm-British," cardigan, nor woollen vest can defeat,—cold that lives during the monotony of the march, to vanish when the first shot breaks the weary tension of the quest. The defiling line seemed endless: the noise, to nerves which are taut as 'cello-strings, would seem to increase rather than diminish. Surely such a hubbub would wake the dead! If there is a Burgher within a mile, he must by this be all attention! Ah, here is the last, and the rear ten files halt on the col, and the little subaltern told off for the purpose distributes them along the ridge. The men fling themselves down wearily, and, Tommy-like,

commence to blow their fingers in an endeavour to bring back circulation to the perished extremities. With muffled whispers the subaltern corrects the placing of his men, some to face this way, others that, and then returns to the cool to keep solitary vigil with his troop-sergeant. What would he not give to smoke! And as he peers into the darkness, deepening at the approach of dawn, the footsteps of his descending comrades strike fainter and fainter upon the ear. A murmur—and then the sound is merged with the other noises of silent night. None but a sentry can appreciate this paradox, can know how noisy and yet how still and silent night can be.

It is all part of a preconcerted plan. Two columns are surrounding a parallelogram of kopje, which is known to be the home of a small but truculent commando. Each earth and run is to be stopped during the night, and then the main body of one column will draw the parallelogram from end to end. The war is fading to a close, and in evidence of this information comes readily and freely. The possibility of a final issue has realised a crop of mean Iscariots. They would hedge against the future estate, which can only now be a matter of weeks. Call them what you may—National Scouts, Intelligence Guides, or Burgher Police—they are Iscariots still, who are ready to sell the lives and bodies of their brothers for the price they will fetch in gold and the good offices of the conqueror. And well this night

have they done their work. The stops have been led up mountain paths, which required no picketing when treachery was not within the compass of the sleepers' calculation.

The squadron leader had been told off to surround a farm within the precincts of the parallelogram—a farm at which it was said the local commandant was wont to sleep. It was opined that the capture of this commandant would greatly simplify the forthcoming operation, and a specially selected squadron was detailed to accompany the tame Burgher. The special instructions to the squadron commander were, that having picketed the path by which he found his way into the inner sanctity of the Boer position, he was to capture the inmates of the farm, and if practicable to hold some position in the inner valley until the operations destined for the morrow developed. The Intelligence officer from the column also accompanied the band of raiders, for the purpose of exercising a gentle control over the tame Burgher.

Three officers, the Iscariot, and a Kaffir, groped their way down through the mist at the head of the column. Progress was slow; but as they sank into the lower levels a more distinct path presented itself, and then when they ceased to descend and met the plain, they found they were through the more opaque body of the mist. An indistinct mass loomed up in front of them. Iscariot and the Kaffir enjoined silence—it was evident that the raiders had reached their goal. The

squadron had been selected for its knowledge of the part desired of it. The night-raiding of farmsteads was to them no new sensation. Much practice had made them expert. A few muffled whispers—a short reconnaissance by the squadron commander and the Intelligence officer—and then with bated breath the orders were put in circulation. Ten minutes was allowed for section leaders to post their men, and then the two senior officers and Iscariot walked up to the *stoep*, knowing that the sergeant-major had the rear secure, and that men were prepared at every window and outhouse.

Just a moment of suspense—that moment which quickens the pulse of the boldest, and tightens the nerves even of the veteran steeped in war. The moment the leader raises his hand to knock for admittance at the door, every ear is strained, for though the eye cannot see, yet the nerves can feel the blow must come.

Rat-tat-tat! Rat-tat-tat!

The hand closes more tightly on the rifle. The finger seeks the trigger. In a moment we may be engaged in the sternest measure meted out to mortal man. Yet there is no sound: the silence is ominous. It may mean that the enemy is prepared, and that the counter-mine is laid.

Rat-tat-tat!

The second summons is even more peremptory than the first. There is a movement in the interior. A half-closed shutter shows the glimmer of a light. The door creaks. The wooden bolt shoots back. Now—

“Hands up!” Back swings the upper half of the stable door. “Hands up!”

What need of the threat implied in that hoarse command—what need of murderous weapons and brutal gesture? The door flies back, but to disclose a shrinking maiden, whose trembling hand can scarcely hold the home-made rushlight. Half-dressed, dazed by the suddenness of the awakening, terrified by the apparition of armed men and levelled rifles, the child shrinks back. Her mute terror should have moved the trespassers. But there was no time for sentiment. The maid is brushed aside, the candle seized from her hand, and in a moment the search is commenced.

A door half opened—it would have banged to again, but the squadron commander’s foot barred the way. He might have spared himself the trouble,—the house was empty but for women. A mother and three daughters. Simultaneously the outhouses were searched. Once there was a scuffle and a stir. In a moment the invaders placed themselves on the alert defensive. A Kaffir had tried to break through the cordon. It was all over in a moment—it did not matter to him now, whether he had sought to carry information, or in blind terror had hoped to save his skin.

In five minutes the Intelligence officer was satisfied that the draw was blank, and while he set himself to examine the women, the squadron commander, in consultation with his subaltern, posted his men

against such developments as daylight might have in store for them.

The main approach to the homestead lay through an avenue of pointed gum-trees. A hundred yards of avenue, and then the path, zigzagging like a sheep-track, worked up a slow incline, until it was lost in an under-feature of the higher ground. At the moment the darkness and fleecy mist disguised all this; but the squadron was expert in night dispositions. The avenue was evident; its proximity and the usual kraals and farm enclosures gave exceptional cover, and in a few minutes the squadron commander was satisfied that with a little daylight he could hold his own. He returned to the farm. Already the Intelligence officer was on easy terms with the inmates. A lamp had been lighted, and the lady of the house and her daughters, half-dressed as they were, were busying themselves in a hospitable endeavour to make a brew of coffee. The light of the lamp showed that it was a home of more than ordinary refinement. Crude, dingy, and heavy perhaps from an English point of view; but homely and luxurious as Dutch houses are assessed in South Africa.

English was spoken as if it were the natural tongue, and considering the incongruity of the hour and the nature of the visit, both trespassers and occupants seemed upon the best of terms. Nor were the young ladies, as they fitted from shelf to table in their hospitable en-

deavour, adverse to the blandishments of their unbidden guests. The straight-limbed young Englishmen seemed to find favour in their eyes. But of the tame Burgher they would have nothing. He, knowing nothing of the craft which we call deference to the weaker sex, pressed his good offices in a manner which called forth a quick admonition from his superiors, and loosed the tongue-strings of the youngest of the girls. In a moment the maiden was in arms. Her blue eyes deepened in colour, her bosom heaved, and forsaking or forgetting the borrowed tongue, she burst forth in the *taal*—

"You mean creature! You hound of a 'hands-upper'! you dare to lay a finger on me, and I will turn you over to these Englishmen, who hate and despise you as much as we do. *You* in karki!—an English officer can look nice in it, but a *verdomde* 'hands-upper' looks no better than a Kaffir. You bring the English here that they may kill our people,—kill our fathers, brothers, and cousins, and then think that we will meet you as men. Have we not a brother on the Berg, whom to-morrow you will try and shoot? If he was a 'hands-upper' such as you, I would never hold up my head again. You spy! I would sooner a Kaffir touched me than you—*Voetsak!*"¹

The tame Burgher withered under the lash of that fair tongue. Stung to retaliation, he made the intimidating step

¹ *Voetsak!* Dutch, "Get out!" used to dogs and Kaffirs.

which had given birth to the culminating epithet. The squadron commander, a man of few words but deliberate action, ranged himself beside the girl, and motioned Iscariot to a corner in the room.

The incident was past. But it had been instructive. English and Dutch may blend together, and the granulation of time may heal the sore; but the partisan feeling that has arisen between prudence and patriotism is a far more deeply seated cancer. It will fester afresh when nothing of the first great sore remains.

The coffee was passed round, and the Intelligence officer, seeing an opportunity in the recent outburst, crossed the room and sat beside the angry child.

"Where is your brother?" he asked.

"On the Berg waiting for daylight, where every true Burgher who is not a coward should be!" and the girl tossed her shapely head angrily towards the guide.

"Well, I hope that he will surrender quietly to-morrow."

"Surrender!—my brother become a 'hands-upper'!—you do not know my brother: he has fought from the very beginning, and will fight to the bitter end. We would sooner see him dead than——"

The squadron commander had walked across to the window: already the black of night was softening behind the Berg, and the great saw-edged outline of the crest stood out from the indefinite haze of night. For a period the gloom in the valley deepened, and

then as the night sky melted into grey, and the grey grew tinged with crimson, day asserted itself with that abruptness peculiar to the veldt. The mists of night disentangled themselves from the barren hillsides, and all was clear. The squadron commander shaded his eyes, and then without remark cast loose his glasses. For a moment he was intent, then he beckoned the Intelligence officer to his side. Something was moving on the hillside. The light seemed to strengthen with spasmodic jerks. Beyond the avenue a white path zigzagged up the mountain-side. Upon the path was a horseman. He was rapidly descending, and it was now easy to see that he led a spare horse with him.

The squadron commander turned round abruptly. The four women had risen to their feet. They had anticipated events, and could ill conceal their agitation. In a short breath the orders were given: "Kingsly, you remain here and look after these ladies. Not a soul moves to the window-side of the room. We will nab that fellow." The tame Burgher and the Intelligence officer proceeded to follow the squadron leader to the back entrance of the house. In a second the maid who had shown such spirit was at the Intelligence officer's side—she caught his sleeve: "He is my brother. You must not shoot—you must give him 'hands-up'!" In a moment she ceased to be the steadfast unrelenting patriot, and was a woman and sister—just such a loving, timorous

woman and sister as there are many thousands in this country to-day.

"Of course he will have 'hands-up'!" and the Intelligence officer was through the door, bolting it behind him.

The squadron sergeant-major was picked up at the door, and the nearest men in hiding in the avenue warned. The order was passed round that no one was to fire—the man was to be made a prisoner. The two officers, the tame Burgher, and the sergeant-major, with their carbines at the ready, stooped behind a rough hedgerow.

Presently the drumming of hoofs was audible, then the sound of whistling. The youth was whistling merrily in the exhilaration of new-found day. Gaily down the path he came, returning home after his night of picket duty, as he had done a hundred times before. He was level with the hedge. "Hands up!" The four levelled carbines were almost at the horses' noses. They started back and snorted in alarm. But their terror was nothing in comparison with that depicted on the face of the Burgher. He was a boy of perhaps two-and-twenty, and even in the short second of the encounter the likeness to his sisters was ridiculously apparent. Half of their own accord, half by an impulse of self-preservation on the part of their rider, the horses swung round. Lying flat on their necks, the boy sought safety in flight.

"You fool! Hands up!" shouted the squadron leader.

"Hands up, or we shoot!" And he fired his weapon into the ground. But it was no use, the horses were now into their stride.

"Fool!" said the squadron commander as he jerked in the bolt of his carbine. "We must shoot him!"

Four rifles spoke. The body lying on the necks of the horses swayed sideways, and then slid to the ground, bringing one of the horses to its knees, and checking the flight of both.

"I've killed him!" and there was a ring of piteous regret in the squadron commander's voice.

We turned the body over. We had all killed him, for the four bullets had taken effect, and each must have been a fatal wound. There he lay dead, upon the very threshold of the home which had known him from childhood. Shot down before his mother's eyes. We carried him in. What more could we do? And we offered to dig a grave. Mother and sisters received their dead with stoical self-restraint. But as they removed the handkerchief from the fair young face, the youngest burst into tears.

"Oh, why did you not 'hands up' him?" came the piteous wail.

Boom! boom! boom! And the sound of guns reverberated down the valley. The day's work had begun. The drive had commenced, and we had to leave the stricken family with its dead and its grief. Yet the memory of that day was to haunt some of us for weeks. For of such is made up the tale of war, which men call glorious.

OUR FOOD-SUPPLY IN TIME OF WAR.

THE islands of Great Britain and Ireland are in an absolutely unique condition with regard to their food-supply; there can be no question about this. Never before in the world's history has such a large population been crowded into so small, and at the same time so unproductive, a space—that is to say, unproductive in the way of food. Men can live without most of the things which go to make up the comforts of civilised life; but without food they cannot live. They can neither eat railway iron nor cotton print; and although there may be at any time millions of pounds' worth of these in Great Britain, if they cannot be exchanged into food as rapidly as the people want the food, the people must starve. And rich and poor will starve together, for the poor will not starve and see the rich eat: they will take by force that which they cannot buy, and they will certainly help themselves to a full share of anything eatable that may still be left in the country when once famine has set in.

But it may be asked, Why should famine set in? We cannot be starved in these islands until our navy is defeated, and we have the strongest navy in the world, and numerous cruisers to protect our commerce and our corn-supply, and although we do not produce the food ourselves we can always buy as much as we want, as long as we have money to pay

for it. Food will always find its way into the country somehow, and even if our navy suffers some temporary reverses, no blockade can be so strict as to prevent some corn-ships from arriving. The above is a fair sample of the optimistic view of the situation which is held—or at any rate expressed—by a large number of people who either shrink from facing the problem fair and square; or who, having looked casually into the food-supply question, are unable to reason logically upon the facts which have come before them in the shape of an unpleasant surprise.

It is not a question of whether or no a certain quantity of food will find its way into the country during a war with one or more of the maritime Powers. The question of, What *price* can enough food to keep our millions of working men and the women and children dependent on them from starving be put upon the market at? is the one to be answered. This will be the first and most urgently pressing problem with which the British Government will have to deal on the outbreak of war. Naval victories will not avail us if millions are starving in these islands. There will go up a loud, a bitter, and an irresistible cry for peace, peace at any price, a cry which no Government would be able to resist; and as to what "any price" would mean for this country at

the hands of her jealous and envious rivals, it is not pleasant to think of.

Hard facts, though unpleasant, are better faced than shirked. This country is now in the position of a garrison, which may at any time have to suffer a siege,—not necessarily a close siege, an absolute blockade of all her ports, but a siege during which the supplies of food which ordinarily find their way into the country, and which are only sufficient to keep the population from starvation, will be seriously curtailed; and, moreover, the supplies that do arrive will be sold at such enhanced prices as to be entirely beyond the reach of many millions of the poorer classes. Garrisons which are liable to be besieged usually take the precaution of laying in a good supply of corn during peace-time. Take Malta for instance. There we keep large supplies of grain, recognising the probability of starvation if we did not do so. But this island of Great Britain (and to a less extent Ireland) is in precisely the same condition as Malta, but without the store of corn, and with the aggravation that millions will have to be dealt with instead of thousands. Even at the present time of writing, a time of peace, we receive harrowing descriptions of distress—*i.e.*, semi-starvation amongst a considerable proportion of the working classes, on account of the slackness of trade, and from this we can form some faint idea of what would take place

during a naval war. The present distress is said to be caused through lack of work amongst some of the poorer labouring classes. Not that there is an insufficiency of food in the country at the present moment, but simply that a large number of people have no money to buy it; that they are unable to get work, and that consequently they and the women and children depending upon them cannot afford to purchase the bare necessities of life, and thus have to be supported by charity in order to keep them from actual starvation. We also have the experience of the Lancashire cotton famine in the early "Sixties," when the curtailment in the supply of only one of the items of the raw material by the manufacture of which our teeming population lives, produced the most terrible distress amongst nearly a million of the men, women, and children who had been supported on the money earned by the manufacture of cotton goods: and these had to be relieved by charity to keep them from starvation.

This Lancashire cotton famine—as it has been called—may perhaps give us some idea of what the Government of this country would have to face if we went to war—or rather, let us say, if we were driven into a war—with one or more of the great Powers which are now the possessors of formidable navies. It is not necessary to go very closely into details in this matter. We need not split

hairs either, for the case is broad, very broad; and it is practically certain that on the outbreak of war with a naval Power (one Power alone) the following events would take place: All our foreign-going sailing-ships would be laid up; some of our slow cargo-carrying steamers would be captured by the enemy's cruisers and armed auxiliaries, already fitted and designed for the purpose. There would be an enormous rise in the rate of marine insurances. A large number of our merchant steamers of only moderate speed would be laid up, those near a neutral port seeking refuge therein. The great bulk of our raw material for manufacture and nearly all our supply of foreign corn, being carried by comparatively slow ships, would thus be cut off; or if any got through, it could only be landed at such enhanced prices for the raw material as to render it commercially unprofitable for manufacture; and the corn at such prices that the great majority of the working classes would be unable to buy it in sufficient quantities even with their present wages. But as many millions would be thrown out of work by the dislocation in our trade, they would be getting no wages at all, and it requires no great stretch of imagination to picture what their condition would be.

These things will certainly happen to the country sooner or later, and perhaps sooner than many people think, if provision is not made beforehand

to meet the difficulty. And a difficulty it is, of so grave a character that many timid people—and amongst them, unfortunately, some of our leading statesmen—are afraid to face it, and, like Felix, they tremble, and would put it off for "a more convenient season." But this is not statesmanship. It is mere opportunism, unworthy of the rulers of a great nation. Moreover, the day that war breaks out, or becomes highly probable, will not be a convenient season, but a most inconvenient season for dealing with it; for it is a danger which may be minimised, or perhaps even removed, by prompt and vigorous action now, and, on the other hand, greatly magnified by delay and timidity in facing it—for we are steadily going from bad to worse. That is to say, we are year by year becoming more and more dependent upon sea-borne food (mainly from foreign countries), and there is a steady tendency to reduce the stock of corn and flour in these islands, and to store the corn already bought upon the other side of the Atlantic instead of upon this side, so as to save storage dues. Truly a hand-to-mouth and short-sighted method of preparing ourselves to resist attack. For it must be remembered that our possible enemies (our jealous rivals) know these things as well as, if not better than, we do, and may be trusted to attack us in our weakest place,—are in fact making preparations to do so, by steadily building numerous vessels specially de-

signed for the destruction of commerce. Whose commerce?

The country should, as soon as possible, be disabused of the fallacious idea that our navy, either present or prospective, is, or will be, strong enough to protect our sea-borne commerce, in view of the large number of fast and powerful cruisers, both regular warships and easily convertible auxiliaries, now preparing for its destruction by those whose interest it is to see our mercantile marine disappear from the ocean. All our admirals know perfectly well that the great majority of our cruisers would be required to act as the eyes of our battle squadrons, without which we should be surely courting disaster, so that there would be very few left to patrol our trade-routes or shadow the enemy's commerce-destroyers.

It has been suggested that the invention of wireless telegraphy will be a great assistance to us, and enable us to dispense to a considerable extent with the number of scouts and look-out vessels hitherto considered necessary to the proper conduct of a battle squadron. But there does not seem to be any proof of this, nor even any plausible reason for assuming that such will be the case. The practical application and the limitations of wireless telegraphy for war purposes have yet to be proved. Two can play at the game, and

we have already seen during our naval manoeuvres how easy it is to interrupt messages or turn them into nonsense, to say nothing of the possibility of the enemy sending false intelligence. Of course there would be secret codes, but codes are easily found out when you can take in all the messages, so that we can scarcely look to wireless telegraphy to help us more than our enemies. Imagine, for instance, a squadron of battle-ships blockading a hundred miles off an enemy's port, with a chain of cruisers or scouts extending towards the shore, and trying to keep the admiral informed of the enemy's movements during the intervals when they were not dodging submarines and torpedo-boats. The enemy would have twenty stations along the shore, all going hard day and night, filling the air with wireless messages in every known language, so that the precincts of the Tower of Babel, or an Irish political meeting, would pale before the confusion which would ensue.

It is not our intention to confuse or weary our readers by quoting voluminous statistics, although we shall state nothing which cannot be proved up to the hilt by thoroughly reliable figures, of which, however, it will be desirable perhaps to give a few. The following table¹ deals with wheat only, bread being the staff of life:—

¹ Reprinted from 'Dornbusch's List,' 27th September 1901.

COMPARATIVE SUPPLIES OF ENGLISH AND FOREIGN WHEAT, ALSO
POPULATION OF UNITED KINGDOM (omitting 000's).

Cereal years.	United Kingdom.		Wheat and flour imports.	Available for consumption.	Population.
	Wheat crop area.	Wheat crop (less seed).			
	acres.	qrs.	qrs.	qrs.	
1854-55	4037	16,427	2,983	19,410	27,767
1859-60	4020	12,004	4,516	16,520	28,715
1864-65	3686	15,180	5,500	20,680	29,700
1869-70	3977	12,301	9,921	22,222	30,760
1874-75	3822	12,898	11,705	24,603	33,629
1879-80	3048	5,047	16,410	21,457	34,388
1884-85	2745	9,307	18,001	27,308	36,200
1889-90	2545	8,771	19,093	27,864	38,065
1894-95	1454	4,373	25,000	29,373	39,600
1895-96	1731	6,793	22,693	29,486	39,800
1896-97	1693	6,492	21,845	28,337	40,000
1897-98	2155	8,754	22,147	30,900	40,337
1898-99	2052	7,830	23,263	31,093	40,708
1899-00	1845	7,500	22,355	29,855	41,000
1900-01	1701	6,000	24,392	30,392	41,300

The bulk of our imported wheat comes from the United States, but we also import considerable quantities from Russia, Germany, Roumania, Argentina, Australia, Canada, and in smaller quantities from several other places beyond the seas. We also import wheat-meal and flour, oat-meal, barley, maize, rye, buck-wheat, peas, beans. Also 17,000,000 cwt. of meat yearly, besides cheese, butter, eggs, and other eatables in large quantities.

The following statement has been made by a number of the leading corn-merchants in this country :—

"We, the undersigned, concur in the opinion that, if Great Britain should become involved in a European war, the country must be prepared to see bread at practically famine prices. We base our opinion on the following reasons—

"1. The experience of the Napole-

onic and Crimean wars, during each of which, though we possessed full command of the sea, the price of wheat rose enormously.

"2. As late as the Crimean war we were almost self-supporting, but we now import four-fifths of our wheat.

"3. The chief source of our supply is the United States; but the price of wheat on the American corn market can be raised artificially, and in the event of a European war in which Great Britain was involved, it is quite possible, indeed probable, that it would be so raised.

"4. The corn trade on both sides of the Atlantic would expect to make war profits on a scale commensurate with war risks.

"5. The capture of a few food-ships such as, having regard to the relative strength of our navy, appears inevitable, would still further drive prices up.

"It is not possible to specify the height to which the price of wheat, and consequently of bread, would rise, for it would depend on the degree to which it was influenced by each of the five factors before enumerated. Taking, however, into account the vast importance of the

question of our food-supply in time of war, we feel that the country ought to know that in the opinion of corn-merchants it must, in the event of such a war, prepare to see wheat, and consequently bread, at what would be to the poor famine prices."

The above manifesto—as we may call it—is signed by twenty - six of the leading corn-merchants of the United Kingdom.

And now it will not be amiss to ask ourselves what the probable consequences will be of a sudden great rise in the price of wheat, and a proportionate rise in all other food-stuffs. It is calculated by those who have the best possible means of knowing that there are in Great Britain 7,000,000 human beings in such poverty, and living so absolutely from hand to mouth, that any considerable rise in the price of bread (much less than that contemplated by the corn-merchants) would bring them to a state of absolute starvation; and it is further calculated that any serious dislocation of our ocean trade, any material stoppage of the import of the various raw materials for manufacture, and the export of the finished goods when made, would throw out of work men upon whom from ten to fifteen millions more are dependent for their daily bread. We have carefully examined the statistics, and, without wishing to trouble our readers with strings of figures, we can assure them that it is no exaggeration to say that if we become involved this year in a war with two of the maritime Powers of Europe

(or probably even with one), our present navy, strong as it is, would be absolutely unable to sweep the enemy's commerce-destroyers from the seas, and to ensure the delivery of the food on which we live, and of the raw material the manufacture of which enables us to buy that food; and thus at the very outbreak of the war our Government would, in addition to their other anxieties, be brought face to face with the problem of feeding from fifteen to twenty millions of the poorer classes in these islands. What preparations have been made for doing so? And what will be the consequences if they fail to do so? The answer to the first question is, None! and the answer to the second question is, Revolution, anarchy! the depredations of an angry and starving mob, which no power of Government will be able to resist if they have not the means of feeding them; and, finally, an ignominious and ruinous peace; the surrender of our navy; and a crushing war-indemnity—in short, the end of English history. Our colonies will not be able to help us, as they have no navies.

The above is no mere alarmist cry, as perhaps the "Little Englanders" will tell us, intended to get up an agitation to extract more money from the taxpayers in order to add to our already "bloated armaments." No conceivable navy could save us unless we are in a position to feed our teeming millions, either free or at reasonable cost during the first six months at least of a mari-

time war; and how this is to be done with only three to four months corn-supply in the country, and a general tendency to reduce that stock—on account of the cost of storage—it is difficult to see.

We have already pointed out that we are in the position of a great fortress, liable to be besieged at any moment, and it is blind folly to shut our eyes to this fact, or to suppose that the garrison of this fortress (41 millions) can be fed in accordance with the ordinary laws of political economy, on the principle of supply and demand adjusting themselves to the situation. This, of course, will, and does, take place in time of peace; but it will not do so in time of war, if the free passage of the sea is disputed, even in a minor degree. Some of our readers who have not hitherto paid much attention to the economic conditions of their country may be surprised at these disclosures, and ask in consternation how it is that our rulers have allowed the country to get into this extraordinary and dangerous condition with regard to its food-supply. The answer is simple. The people cried for free trade and cheap bread, and they have got them, with all the consequences attending them—that is to say, they have got cheap bread in time of peace, with the extreme probability of no bread at all in time of war.

The end of the Napoleonic wars found England (as she was then usually called) undisputed mistress of the seas.

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She had no rival, and she set to work to found and develop colonies, to greatly extend her power and her dominions in India, to take to herself the lion's share of the ocean trade of the world—her only serious rival being the United States—and, finally, to turn her little island into the workshop of the world. Naturally the operatives in the workshop demanded cheap bread: the tax on imported corn was abolished; agriculture declined; land went out of cultivation; people flocked into the towns, where wages were high, bread cheap, trade brisk; young people married early, and produced large families of stunted town-bred children. But what matter? A rapid increase in the population was obviously a sign of the prosperity of the country, and as the table given above from Dornbusch shows, more and more land went out of cultivation—or, at any rate, out of cereal cultivation—and the population continued to increase rapidly. Then came the American Civil War in 1861, and our only serious rivals on the ocean disappeared, and we got their trade. Then, as improvements were made in marine engines, mercantile steamers gradually took the place of sailing-ships, and we found that we were better hands at building steamers than other people, and could build them cheaper, so up went this trade by leaps and bounds. The Suez Canal, opened in 1869, gave a fresh impetus to our trade, contrary to the opinion of so shrewd a judge as Lord

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Palmerston; and then quickly following this came the Franco-Prussian War, which gave to British trade yet another spurt, for while "Furious Frank and fiery Hun" were engaged in their deadly struggle, we were quietly doing all the carrying-trade of the Eastern hemisphere, and a fair share of the Western. But it ought to have been obvious to any acute observer that this kind of thing could not go on. Perhaps it was foreseen that it must come to an end soon; but even if that was the case, no power of government could have stopped it as long as the cause or causes for this abnormal prosperity lasted, for those causes were mainly fortuitous, and outside our own control.

Whatever the causes may have been, and without stopping to argue that point, we now have to face the consequences, and to consider seriously the very grave situation of two small islands containing 41 millions of people, mainly workers and manufacturers, very industrious and energetic, but only producing for themselves about a quarter of their own food-supply, and largely dependent on the freedom of the seas for their means of earning a livelihood. If these islands contained only the said workers and the fringe of very poor attaching to them, it is possible that they might not excite the envy and jealousy of their neighbours; but, in addition to the workers and the poor, they contain a large number of "well-to-do" or "comfortably off" people, and a smaller num-

ber of rich, and very rich. We are in fact an extraordinarily rich nation: possessing vast territories beyond the seas, numerous strategic points of immense value, and an enormous and valuably freighted mercantile marine—all of which are causes of jealousy, bitter envy, and absolute hatred, to some of our European neighbours, who seek these things for themselves; though happily this is not the case with our blood-relations in North America, who are so prosperous themselves, and have obviously got such a magnificent future before them, that they can regard our success without envy—in fact, can feel proud of it, as an evidence of the virility and energy of the race from which they themselves have mainly sprung. But it is otherwise with Europe, and it is useless to deny the fact that we are envied and hated, and that our downfall would evoke a shout of joy from Gibraltar to St Petersburg. We quote, from memory, a stanza of Byron:—

"He who ascends to mountain-tops
shall find
The loftiest peaks most wrapped in
clouds and snow.
He who surpasses or subdues mankind
Must look down on the hate of those
below.
Though high above the sun of glory
glow,
And far beneath the earth and ocean
spread,
Round him are icy rocks, and loudly
blow
Contending tempests round his naked
head,
And thus reward the toils which to
those summits led."

This was written of Napoleon, who did as a man that which we have done as a nation.

We have surpassed mankind in commerce and in riches, and we have subdued many races,—our last venture in this direction having proved to be the toughest job we ever had to accomplish, and only possible by virtue of our immense riches, almost boundless resources, and the assistance of our colonies; but giving us at the same time an ominous though much-needed warning of a serious decline in the warlike qualities of our race, caused directly by the decline in agriculture in these islands, and the consequent necessity of recruiting our soldiers from a stunted, physically weak, and highly nervous town population, far more liable to panic than the sturdy, thick-skinned, country bumpkins who fought our former wars, never knew when they were beaten, and very rarely surrendered. Should famine come upon the land, however, these same nervous townsmen may be trusted to turn upon their rulers, and in the madness of hunger they will be troublesome people to deal with. Is it not reasonable to ask, then, that the rulers of this fortress with its garrison of 41 millions, spending over 60 millions a-year on warlike preparations for its defence, should spend a few more millions if necessary, and take adequate steps to ensure that the fortress shall not be reduced by starvation three or four months after war is declared?

We do not propose to dictate precisely what the steps should be: several remedies have been suggested,—State granaries, modified protection, a premium

to farmers on corn stored, an immense increase in our present navy, and several others. We offer no opinion on these points for the present. All we ask for is a thorough and honest inquiry into the subject; for we are entirely unable to agree with the strangely optimistic view of the situation held by a few, and expressed by Lord Avebury at a recent meeting of the British Empire League, when he said—

“I do not rise to oppose this motion” (a motion for inquiry), “because if there is serious alarm on a question it is as well to face it, and I should be sorry to set my own view against that of others: still, I confess I am happy in the conviction that we shall never starve as long as Paris and Berlin have plenty to eat, and I feel satisfied, therefore, that as long as there is food in Europe no power on earth will prevent a fair share of it from coming to this country. I believe, moreover, that as long as the Western farmers in America have large crops to sell, the United States will never permit any other Power to stop their produce going to the best market.”

It is not wildly improbable that both Paris and Berlin might be hostile; and are we really justified in expecting that our enemies in a European war will follow our own quixotic procedure in South Africa, and feed our women and children for us whilst our men are fighting against them? It would be interesting to hear a German reply to this question. If not sarcastic, it would probably be more frank than polite.

Lord Avebury's second assumption—that the American farmers would insist on pouring their corn into Great Britain—seems to be founded

on no firmer basis; for, short of declaring or provoking war with Great Britain's enemies, the American farmers could do nothing of the sort, and not for certain even then. But what is certain is that, on the outbreak of a war with this country, her enemies would immediately declare corn and all food-stuffs to be contraband of war, which neutral bottoms do not protect. It is no doubt possible that if we were to find ourselves involved in war with one or more of the European Powers, and they endeavoured to starve us out, as they surely would try to do, America might come to our assistance and help to fight our battles. Whether she would or would not do so would depend upon the variable and fluctuating feelings and sentiments of a mighty democracy, which has not always been too friendly to this country, though it may be true that just for the present their friendship is warm and sincere. Yet it seems almost superfluous to point out that the general policy and state of preparation for war of a great and rich empire should not be based upon such precarious possibilities. And then as to neutral bottoms. Why, there are not enough foreign bottoms in the world, even without deducting those of our enemies, to carry the food and raw material necessary for our support.

"Oh, but," say some of our optimists, "our ships could be transferred to neutral flags, and then they could continue to carry our goods, as neutral bottoms protect enemy's goods."

Vain fancy! It is true, no doubt, that, according to that elastic code called "International Law," a neutral bottom protects enemy's goods, "*except contraband of war*"; but, as we have already pointed out, food would certainly be declared contraband, and most probably also iron ore (as it is wanted for building ships and making guns); cotton (as it is wanted for making gun-cotton and cordite); and, in short, anything and everything that a powerful enemy thought would be of use to us would be declared contraband.

And then as to the transfer of our merchant ships to neutral flags on the outbreak of war, it seems to be practically certain that our enemies would not recognise the validity of any such transfer; and, moreover, they would be able to quote a precedent of our own against us. *Vide* Lord Grey's Order in Council of January 17, 1807, which declared that—

"Whereas the sale of ships by a belligerent to a neutral is considered by France to be illegal; and whereas a great part of the shipping of France and of her allies has been protected from capture during the present hostilities by transfers, or pretended transfers, to neutrals; and whereas it is fully justifiable to adopt the same rule in this respect towards the enemy which is applied by the enemy to this country, . . . in future the sale to a neutral of any vessel belonging to the enemy shall not be deemed to be legal, nor in any manner to transfer the property; and all vessels now belonging, or which shall hereafter belong, to any enemies of his Majesty, notwithstanding any sale, or pretended sale, to a neutral, after a reasonable time has elapsed for receiving information of this order at the place where such sale, or pre-

tended sale, was effected, shall be captured and brought in, and shall be adjudged as lawful prize to the captors."

So much, then, for the transfer of our mercantile marine to neutral flags. But supposing, for the sake of argument, that such a thing could take place, and would be recognised by our enemies, what would it mean to this country? The loss of our carrying trade, one of the most important and lucrative of our businesses; and, with the recent example of the United States before us, that it would not return to us with peace.

In conclusion, we can assure our readers that we have not exaggerated the gravity of the situation in the smallest degree. There is no occasion for panic, as there is no immediate prospect of war; though, on the other hand, no wise man would be rash enough to prophesy how long this pacific aspect is likely to continue, with the question of the Persian Gulf and many other small clouds looming on the horizon. The country is in an absolutely unprecedented—and, as we think, critical—condition with regard to her food-supply, and is going from bad to worse, as we have before pointed out; and we maintain that the proper, wise, and statesmanlike course to pursue is to face it boldly, and not to endeavour to shirk it because it happens to be a decidedly unpleasant subject, for it will not be shirked for long with impunity. A thorough and searching inquiry by Select Committee or Royal Commission should be held without delay, for no one can

say how long the day of grace will last; and some of the best intellects of the country must decide what remedy or remedies are to be adopted before it is too late to act. There are probably very few people in this country who want war; yet the history of the world shows us that there is no greater fallacy than that contained in the aphorism which says that it takes two to make a quarrel. It takes only one to make a quarrel, unless the other is prepared to submit quietly to insult and spoliation. International law and international justice are plausible figments, dwelling mainly in the imagination of theorists and doctrinaire statesmen of Mr John Morley's type; but they are not serious factors in practical politics.

It is no doubt true that small and weak nations are still permitted to exist in Europe; but they owe their immunity from attack and extinction simply and solely to the mutual jealousy of their powerful neighbours, and not to any binding laws of international morality. On the other hand, rich nations worth plundering have never been allowed to exist longer than they were able to defend themselves with their own strong arm. "Peace is the dream of the wise, but war is the history of mankind," and there has not yet been found any better way of postponing it than by being thoroughly prepared for it and all its consequences. The strong man armed keepeth his goods in peace; but in addition to his arms and his armour *he must have food.*

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

BOOKS AND STATISTICS—THE LITERARY PARAGRAPH—NO TIME TO READ—
THE LEISURE OF OLD DAYS—UTILITY *VERSUS* LITERATURE—BOOKS
THAT ARE NO BOOKS—THE PRESS AND THE SNIPPET—THE ‘ENCYCLO-
PEDIA BRITANNICA’—THE VALUE OF READING.

IF statistics and appearances are of any value, no age was ever so piously devoted to reading as our own. Books were never cheaper nor more plentiful. So many are published, and at so low a price, that they are ceasing, it is said, to be profitable, while for those who do not care to spend their money upon literature, there is the free library exigent and obtrusive. Indeed, ever since free libraries became a popular form of advertisement, few towns in Great Britain have been able to escape them. The power to read is conferred by Act of Parliament, philanthropy supplies the material, and if the whole world is not given to the Muses, it would seem most wantonly to throw away its chances. Nor is it only that we possess the apparatus. The casual observer might detect signs of a profound interest even in our newspapers. In whatever journal you pick up you will find columns of what are called “literary paragraphs.” They are pert rather than witty—these paragraphs; they are personal rather than intelligent; they prefer the photographer to the critic; and they esteem a sketch of Mr A.’s home-life or a glimpse into Miss B.’s boudoir more highly than a knowledge

of English literature. Nevertheless, “the literary paragraphist”—that, we believe, is the correct term—is a person of influence, before whom the timid author trembles expectantly. Once a week or oftener he pronounces his judgment with an easy confidence which we cannot too highly admire, especially when we remember his light load of learning. He chatters of dead or living with an easy nonchalance; he is learned concerning the rare editions with which (he says) his shelves are weighted; being gifted with prophecy, he will tell you not only what this or that novelist has written, but what he will write the year after next; and in doing all this he never loses that air of patronage which suggests that he himself is far greater than his happy victims. One there is, the master of his craft, whose skill and urbanity we shall never weary of applauding. His energy is limitless like his fancy. He already purveys “literary paragraphs” to at least three “bright” weeklies, and we are told that if he could only find another *nom de guerre* he would be open to another engagement, as the theatrical papers say. Indeed, he reminds us of nothing so much as a Music Hall *artiste* who does a

turn, first here, then there, finding in each place a fresh audience for the same tricks.

Now, highly as we admire the subtle concealment of ignorance, the sly assumption of knowingness, which distinguish these gifted paragraphists, we would not take them too seriously. They are to literature what touts are to the race-course—they give tips. And as the racing-man puts faith in a favourite tipster, so the literary amateur never backs his fancy at a circulating library until he has consulted his own paragraphist. But their existence proves that the interest in printed matter is widespread. They would not take up the space allotted them if they did not supply an imperious demand. It is clear, moreover, from their familiar style, that they are intimately appreciated. They affect an esoteric jargon, which, like the slang of a suburb, seems to exclude the antipathetic stranger. They are never so happy as when they are calling themselves or each other by such nicknames as Meredithians, Stevensonians, Omarians, or Peacockians. What these cant terms mean we do not pretend to understand. It is still possible, we believe, to read the works of distinguished writers without hanging out banners or bowing the knee in exclusive worship. But the mere fact that such titles are bandied about might suggest that books have an interest which they never had before,—that education and free libraries have really done their work.

Again, it is a time of large editions and vast circulations. Novels are sold by the ton, if we may trust the advertisements, and their authors enjoy an income large enough to fill a Lord Chancellor with envy. More than this, there never was an age better supplied with admirable reprints of the classics, and we may in all gravity applaud the text, the typography, and the selection of the Temple Series, to cite but one example. In brief, there are signs on every hand of increasing industry and erudition. We had pictured to ourselves the honest citizen returning from his toil with a bagful of masterpieces, and discussing in his family circle Stevensonianism, Omarianism, and other strange cults. And then comes Mr Andrew Lang to disturb our golden dream. Now, Mr Lang declares, after much research, that nobody reads. It is true that he excludes from his condemnation a few classes, such as judges, female members of the British Peerage, and omnibus-drivers. But, for the rest, his indictment is broad and firm. Reading, says he, is a lost art. Men have no time to read. "They have time to whittle."

Is it a true indictment? We fear it is, and that all the circumstances which we have mentioned are but an illusory parade. When you consider the matter a little more closely, you will discover that the "literary paragraphist" is not an incentive to reading, but a mere trick to save reading altogether. The enthusiast for

easily acquired knowledge gets his "tip" from his paper, and though he is glib enough concerning the books whose titles he has learned, he knows no more of books than the starting-price better knows of horses. So the popularity of the literary paragraph is at once intelligible. It imparts, at no cost, an appearance of knowledge, and an attentive study of certain columns of the evening and weekly press will presently persuade even the laziest amateur that he speaks upon literary matters with an air of authority. If his fellows repeat, parrot-like, his own observations, he can change his tipster, and hope to get ahead of them. We are, therefore, reluctantly persuaded to believe that those columns, upon which, as a wit once said, their writers live, like so many Stylites, are a proof not of interest but of idleness, not of enthusiasm but of vanity. And as for novels, the most popular of them are consumed rather than read; they make no demand upon the intelligence, very little upon the attention; and so long as their pages are cut before they fall into the purchaser's hands, one sample is as good as another. But what of the cheap reprints of the serious classics? Do they find no readers at all, or are they sought after by the omnibus-drivers, the British Peeresses, and the others, whom Mr Lang mercifully excepts from his displeasure?

"I have no time to read"—that, says Mr Lang, is the common excuse; and we agree with him that it is inadmis-

sible. We can all find time, even the busiest of us, for whatever is essential to our happiness. The statesmen of the eighteenth century studied the classics while they governed the country. Cecil Rhodes knew not the meaning of leisure, yet he had time to read and re-read the 'Decline and Fall'—no light task—and to make a study of the Latin decadence. But nowadays the most of men and of women are so nervous that they must ever be moving or talking. In Mr Lang's phrase, they are "always in company, never alone." The truth is, they can face anything more easily than solitude; for solitude is a hard master who enforces thought or work. Chatter, on the other hand, makes no demand upon the brain. It is the spontaneous expression of idleness, the pleasantest anodyne of shattered nerves. Now, for the reading of a real book continued attention is necessary, and continued attention becomes more and more difficult to a community which believes in the gospel of speed. Once upon a time life was a well-ordered progression of simple events, in which the reading of so vast a romance as the 'Grand Cyrus' seemed a brief relaxation. Nothing, in fact, strikes us so acutely in the old memoirs as the tranquil leisure which was every man's birthright. When journeys from place to place were difficult and rarely taken, literature had a meaning which it is fast losing to-day. There were no newspapers to waste

the morning; no box of novels from the library to beguile the afternoon; and even the unlettered thought it no shame to turn over the pages of North's 'Plutarch,' or to put themselves on quoting terms with Virgil and Horace. But to-day tranquillity is out of fashion. Those who can afford motor-cars find their sole pleasure in rushing through the air, and dodging the stopwatch of the policeman; and those who cannot afford these instruments of luxury are content to jolt up and down in a railway-train: so that life, no longer a quiet progress, is a series of shocks and shunts. Under such circumstances who can read more than tit-bit or snippet? Moreover, the child of to-day would find it difficult to read a book, even had he time; and should a real book be put into his hand, he would not feel justified in reading it, unless it were sternly practical and easy of application to a "strenuous" and profitable life. It has been most clearly explained to him that if he follow the old and honourably beaten track he is merely ridiculous. Should he be perverse enough to study Greek and Latin, and so prepare his mind for the art of reading, shrewd business men will charge him with pandering to America and Germany, which are vaguely represented as the enemies of the human race, because they have dared to buy and sell in the same markets as ourselves. No, the modern boy must be efficient—efficient enough to make a

few catch phrases do the work of thought; efficient as Lord Rosebery, who, when he went to speak at Plymouth, left his notes at home. Now, business habits are hindered, we are told, by the study of literature; and, since business habits are to rule the world, everything is triply damned which stands in their way. Imagination, learning, wit, curiosity, are useless in the open market. Therefore let reading perish, and let the work of man be efficiently performed by a tape-measure, a multiplication-table, and a telephone.

But while reading is discouraged on every hand as a thing of no practical utility, the manufacture of printed matter which is not literature, of books that are no books, goes on apace. In the first place, there are the newspapers, the worst of which are the noisiest champions of efficiency, and which are, we fear, the dominant characteristic of our age. A journalist has recently told us that America only lacks a Shakespeare, because the genius of the country, which is plentiful enough, is devoted to the concoction of news and its specious display. The assertion, no doubt, was flattering to the journalist's vanity; but were Shakespeare alive to-day, he would assuredly rather go upon the pad than upon the staff of a newspaper. For the typical newspaper, though it preaches its favourite doctrine of efficiency unceasingly, and professes itself jealous of the national honour, cares for nothing else than sensation,

the prolific mother of hysteria. It even contrives to make a scandal of the weather, and Frost has his headline as though he were a popular murderer. But with all its faults the newspaper is shaping the brain and temper of to-day. As Mr Lang most properly observes, "the newspaper-habit is a disease," which at last destroys those whom it claims for its victims. So you may see a man, otherwise sensible, read half-a-dozen varieties before lunch. He will contemplate with an awe-struck interest the same futile piece of news set in half-a-dozen styles. Maybe a sort of optimism bids him hope that he will find in one sheet some jewel of gossip which had escaped the vigilance of another. And so he devotes many hours to the aimless search after an immaterial fact, which might have been spent in reading or in some other rational pursuit. Of course every sensible man desires to know what is happening about him. But the most of papers not merely conceal such plain facts as are not scandalous, but fill their columns with statements that will not bear the scrutiny of four - and - twenty hours. However, it is useless to disguise the tyranny of the Press; and hundreds who have no time to read can browse with comfort upon a sheaf of newspapers.

And when the newspapers are finished, there are other artifices for killing the time which cannot be spared. There

are, indeed, those innumerable collections of chips and chunks, scraps and snippets, which are fast driving the people to imbecility. Some are called "humorous," some are statistical, all are useless or pernicious. It is the rule of those absurd publications that no "story" or paragraph should be longer than three lines, since the "efficient" brain begins to lag at the fourth, and certainly taken in the bulk they are the worst indictment of the national character that can be framed. The bitterest charges brought against us recently by the Continental press fade into nothingness beside the documentary evidence of these pitiful periodicals, which all bring their proprietors a comfortable income. They are not vicious, oh no! They may be read aloud and laughed at uproariously even in the home itself. They are merely fatuous, and we are sorrowfully convinced that outside England they would not have the smallest chance of success. France may be guilty, as Matthew Arnold always said she was, of lubricity, but her intelligence is not yet out to shreds, and she would never for one instant tolerate such stuff as delights thousands of Englishmen. Nor can it be said that this dissipation of the intellect is harmless. Nothing is harmless which raises false ideals of fun and humour, and which gives an exaggerated value to trivial knowledge. If many generations are fed upon such stuff, the race will revert to the condition of apes.

Not long since we were on a railway journey, and in a corner of the carriage sat a youth, whom study had seemed to have marked for her own. His bulbous forehead was large enough to hold the knowledge of the universe. His sad eyes, whose inefficiency was mitigated by immense spectacles, were hungry with the expectancy of acquisition. His thin fingers trembled as they turned over the hasty pages. For, of course, he was reading; and as we gazed at the wretched spectacle, we thought here is an argument ready and concrete against the sin of study: Poor fellow, we said to ourselves, he has shunned delights and lived laborious days, that he might understand the verse of Homer, the prose of Cicero. And then suddenly we caught sight of the papers which surrounded him, and heard his empty chuckle. He was hemmed in on all sides with 'Bright Bits,' 'Funny Chips,' 'Hasty Snacks,' and the other sheets which beguile the leisure of the insane. Never once did he take his near-sighted eyes from his journals; he read and he laughed many a weary mile; and as he finished one paper he thrust it with a vicious eagerness beneath the seat. Only once did he move, and then at a station, where he dashed to the book-stall, and returned laden with other snacks and chips and bits. It was not in the cause of learning that he had swelled his head and dimmed his eye. No, he was merely a victim to the prevailing vice, and we almost

had it in our heart to pity him. By this time he is probably blind as well as imbecile. Even if he escape destruction, he will surely grow up a useless citizen, and it is not by Latin and Greek that he and his like are unfitted for the impending struggle of which we hear so much.

But the literature which renders reading a rare and difficult accomplishment is not all as frivolous as these profitable rag-bags. Other books that are no books, appeal to the same indolent class, but on other grounds. For the past few years it has been impossible to pick up a newspaper that did not celebrate the size, the weight, the worth of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica.' We have been asked to purchase this enormous work in every tone and for every reason. We have been threatened that if we did not make application within four-and-twenty hours we should miss for ever the chance of a cartload of books. No subtlety of which advertisement is capable has been overlooked by the enterprising salesmen of this printed monster. There are forms offered you to fill up; there are warnings that in a week or a month the price will be raised; and there are pæans sung by the producers to the glory of their undertaking. No kind of puff, known to Europe or America, has been omitted. It is comforting, for instance, to hear that this vast Encyclopædia contains 32,000 pages and 26,000 articles, that its index has no less than 600,000

entries—that in brief it is the biggest, as well as the wisest, book ever written. We are only surprised not to hear how many times its lines would encircle the globe, and how much heavier it is than St Paul's Cathedral. This ingenuity, of course, has not been wasted. Thousands of simple folk have bought the work, merely because they have been told to buy it, and because the initial expenditure of one guinea ensures at once the solid and obvious delivery of thirty or forty volumes. The citizen, to whom reading is repulsive, vaguely believes that he has got more than his money's worth when he sees the grand array of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' and remembers that he has only parted with a single guinea. Of course he is not likely to consult the heavy volumes, but he realises that they give a literary touch to his house, and is perhaps content.

Now, an Encyclopædia may serve a useful and a humble end. It deserves a place in public libraries, where it may wisely be consulted by the half-knowing. But if its limitations be not understood, it is the worst possible enemy of true learning. In other words, it is a good servant, but a bad master, and it should hope to do little else than send the zealous inquirer upon the right road of research. Moreover, it is very soon antiquated. As it appeals to us merely as a repertory of accurately stated facts, it cannot hope for a long life. It possesses no beauty of

style that we should desire it, when fresh knowledge has upset its conclusions. There is no doubt, for instance, that the work known as the Ninth Edition of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica' admirably served its turn. It was planned thirty years ago, and it fittingly represents the diligence and scholarship of a dying generation. It would have been kind, therefore, to let it live out its highly respectable life in decent obscurity. But an enterprising publisher discovered its worth as the material of adroit advertisement, and though when it was first printed, and was still of some practical value, its circulation was limited, it suddenly acquired a fresh and growing interest. The book, of course, had immeasurably declined; nor can any hurried revolution in taste account for its belated prosperity. No; its wide dispersion was achieved mostly by advertisement, and if we cannot applaud the enterprise in the name of sound learning, we cannot but give a word of deprecatory praise to this modern sophistry, which makes the worse book appear the better.

There was, however, one fly in the ointment. Some captious readers complained that the Ninth Edition of the Encyclopædia, the first volume of which appeared in 1875, was devoted to the past, and furthermore that what was past in 1875 should be decently forgotten in 1900. But the publishers were ready to meet the objection. They produced a

set of supplementary volumes, designed to wipe out the reproach. These volumes are happily described by the advertiser as "an altogether novel kind of encyclopædia, an encyclopædia which not only is absolutely 'up-to-date,' containing, as it does, all the latest facts, but which is also devoted exclusively to modern life." Did you ever hear of such a prodigy! An "up-to-date" Encyclopædia! All the latest facts! Why, it might be a special edition of an evening paper but for its weight, or a Christmas number of a spirited periodical. Indeed, if on one page it suggests a popular magazine, on another it recalls that ingenious compilation known as 'Who's Who?' It is encyclopædic only in name and size; it is disfigured by none of the faults which hitherto have seemed inherent in encyclopædias; it is never profound and rarely learned—in brief, it is as "bright and chatty" as a weekly paper—and we hope that before long it will be brought out in penny numbers. Above all, it is distinguished by that pleasant personal touch which is the peculiar characteristic of "up-to-date" literature. There is no man over sixty that may not hope to see his biography printed in these serious pages, that may not, if he glance back to the Ninth Edition, feel himself the equal of Zeno (shall we say?) or Cervantes. The great men of 1880 made no appearance in the Ninth Edition, whose editor did not construe his duties aright. But the great ones of 1900 have all

their chance of immortality, if they be not blighted by youth; and maybe a special supplement will soon be issued for those who are overtaking the sixty years, which are a sure admission into the Temple of Fame. However, it is impossible to add a single word to the praise eloquently found by the publishers for their own enterprise. Their enthusiasm, indeed, is childlike, even if it be not convincing. Without hesitation they refer to their great "literary undertaking," and it is evident that whatever the critics may say they are rapturously pleased with the result. This frank pleasure is not without its charm; but we do not think that the publishers should speak of the Tenth Edition even in a spirit of self-congratulation. A kitten and a rat's tail don't make a cat, and the Ninth Edition of an Encyclopædia, or of any other work, must remain the ninth, however many supplements are added to it. And the expression, Tenth Edition, is especially misleading, because the old Encyclopædia is as different from the new volumes as oil is from water. Were it not for their bindings we should never dream that the two sets of books bore any relation the one to the other, and despite the protestations of advertisers we still await, without the smallest curiosity, the Tenth Edition of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica.'

Thus the books which are no books accumulate; and thus we understand how this age, so rich in printed matter, refrains from reading. But while the

Encyclopædia, in the full pomp of its 40,000,000 words, cumber the shelves of thousands, there is still a class to which no proper appeal has been made. What of the millionaire? He does not want to affect an omniscience which he does not possess by the purchase of culture by the cartload. He wishes to spend his money on something more costly and rarer than a work which boasts a large circulation. But, unhappily, he has been too busy in collecting gold to understand the meaning and value of books. He is, therefore, in the hands of dealers, unless, perchance, he can buy a library ready-made. Not long since a man of wealth, bolder than his fellows, openly advertised for "an old English library." What pleasure this sudden acquisition could give the purchaser we know not. By buying a library ready made the amateur wilfully deprives himself of the pleasures of the chase. Half the joy experienced by the collector lies in the patient filling-up of gaps, in the reward which a zealous search after a missing volume sometimes brings. But a ready-made library! Is it not like a reach-me-down suit? Made by and for another, it merely belongs to its purchaser by accident, and he cannot expect to understand the meaning of books which come to him in the bulk from another's library. However, it may be said in defence of this millionaire that his ambition is sound, and that if only his knowledge and energy had equalled his ambi-

tion, he might have taken his place among genuine collectors. On the other hand, no word of excuse can be found for the rich man who buys the costly editions prepared merely to suit his purse. There are vague rumours to-day of a gigantic edition of the works of Charles Dickens, a single example of which—the edition is limited to fifteen—will cost many thousands of pounds. It will contain all the illustrations ever made by mortal hand for 'Pickwick' and the rest. It will be magnificently printed upon parchment, and "introduced" by distinguished men of letters. And when it is finished, all the millionaires of the world will compete for its possession, and only fifteen will be lucky enough to pay the price. Never was a better instance contrived of the books which are no books. The Millionaire's Dickens will of course be unreadable and unread. Moreover, it will possess no typographical value here or hereafter. This bulky piece of coxcombry can never attain the worth of a noble Caxton or an elegant Aldine. At the best it will prove an object of speculation, rising or falling in the market, like stocks and shares. But as nothing keeps a permanent place that cannot boast some inherent beauty, so it is safe to prophesy that the Millionaire's edition of Dickens will be a very poor investment for the millionaire. For us, the episode is merely interesting, because it shows once again how widely printed matter is removed from literature. There was a time when

all books were designed for the reader. Now some are contrived to cover a wall-space, or to flatter the vanity of the millionaire.

Thus we are brought back to Mr Lang's statement that men and women have ceased to read. The newspaper habit, the rag-bags called magazines, the vast and ponderous array of books which are no books, have interrupted the simple, old fashion of reading. To look for a remedy, of course, is idle: if a man won't read, nothing can make him. Nor do we think it matters very much. After all, reading is valueless, if it be not spontaneous and sincere. A man has not studied a subject because he has looked it up in an Encyclopædia, nor an author because he has read his biography. The works we know best and appreciate best are those which we have discovered for ourselves, without the intervention of dictionaries or paragraphs. Besides, real books, which claim the attention and incite thought were always the possession of the

few, and it is chiefly the wide diffusion of the power to decipher a printed page that has lowered the standard of literature. The champions of compulsory education fondly believed that intelligence would level up. Of course intelligence has levelled down, and thirty years of education has proved that in England at any rate inability to read was no real hardship. At the same time, we may confidently look forward to a reaction. The dissemination of rubbish can hardly continue for ever. The idlest mind will some day tire of fatuity; the idlest hand will find at last that whittling is unsatisfactory; and perhaps even 'Bright Chips' and 'Hasty Snacks' will no longer appear a proper relaxation for the human brain. Then, indeed, books may come to their own again, and the just reproach of Mr Lang may be removed. The only danger is lest the mob of illiterates, like a drunken Samson, should involve in its own ruin the temple of learning and intelligence.

A FRENCH MINISTER OF MARINE ON NAVAL
ARMAMENTS AND POLICY.¹

IN the middle of last summer there appeared in Paris a treatise of some 300 pages entitled 'Le Programme Maritime de 1900-1906.' It was published anonymously, but rumour whispered that it was inspired by M. de Lanessan, the French Minister of Marine. Possibly owing to this fact, as well as to its undoubted merits, the book found a rapid sale, and a second edition was published in November. By this time the portfolio of the Ministry of Marine had passed to M. Pelletan, and the new edition of the Programme appeared with De Lanessan's name on the title-page. He also contributed a Preface, in which he pointed out that the object of his book was to place before the navy, the members of Parliament, and the public the reasons which caused the Programme of 1900-1906 to be adopted. The trend of recent events in France has shown that M. de Lanessan's appeal to the public is fully justified by the fact that his successor is apparently unwilling to carry out the Programme in its entirety, and there seems considerable probability that at the best the ships approved under De Lanessan's guidance will not be completed within the time stipulated; whilst some of them may possibly be

abandoned. Still, the publication of the book under review, and the indiscretions of M. Pelletan, the present Minister of Marine, have stirred up a considerable public opinion in France favourable to pushing on with De Lanessan's proposals; and it is not unlikely that strenuous efforts may be made to overtake the arrears of work.

Be that as it may, it is well worth the while of all who are interested in naval affairs to listen to what De Lanessan has to say for himself and his programme, for a better and more concise exposition of the present position of naval policy on both sides of the Channel has not appeared for many years. Coloured it may be by De Lanessan's leaning towards groups of big ships of one and the same type, but he is absolutely sound when he points out that all the world over the tendency is towards large armoured ships, and that the deck-protected cruiser is a thing of the past.

Without conceding his claim to have led the way in determining the future type of fighting ships, we may well agree that for the present, at any rate, we know of nothing better than De Lanessan's five types—battle-ships, armoured cruisers, destroyers, torpedo-boats, sub-

¹ *Le Programme Maritime de 1900-1906.* Par J. L. de Lanessan, *Député, Ancien Ministre de la Marine.* Paris: Felix Alcan. 1903.

marines And, with the exception of a few experiments in the way of scouts and third-class cruisers, all nations are building little or nothing but the above.

It is somewhat remarkable that a programme of naval construction, which was initiated by the Conseil Supérieur de la Marine in November 1899, submitted to Parliament early in 1900, passed by the Chamber of Deputies in June, and confirmed by the Senate in December 1900, should require to be bolstered up in 1902 by a three-and-a-half franc yellow-backed brochure, written by the Minister of Marine himself. Complaints are frequently made at home that we are vacillating and inconsistent in pushing on the work of strengthening the Navy, but at any rate we stick to our programmes when they are once agreed to. In this it cannot be said that they do things better in France.

The book opens with a historical review of French policy since the days of Francis I. The author vigorously condemns the Continental policy of Louis XIV. and Napoleon; he declares that France was weakened, exhausted, reduced by her glorious but costly Continental campaigns, whilst Great Britain, by her maritime and commercial policy, not only became the richest nation in the world, but also rose to such a position as to be without a rival amongst the sea powers. He believes in peace, but it is the peace of the strong man armed. After advocating the construction of navigable canals

and the improvement of these already existing, which he hopes would cause much, if not most, of the exterior trade of Europe to traverse French routes, whilst Paris would become a sort of Continental London, he proceeds: "It is incontestable, indeed, that, owing to the mental state of the majority of the men of our time, force is, and will for long remain, the most valuable guarantee of peace. Consequently, if, renouncing the policy of Louis XIV. and Napoleon, we are resolved to devote all our genius and activity to the development of our industries, our commerce, our maritime and colonial expansion, we ought to become so strong on the sea and in the colonies that no rival should be tempted to put herself across our path of peaceful expansion in the world." Not a word is said of reducing the army estimates; in fact, the peace and security of the country is in another passage said to rest on the army "so strongly reconstituted since 1870," and also on the alliance with Russia. Thus, according to her Minister of Marine, France, like her great neighbour and rival, Germany, should be ready to bear the weight of both a gigantic army and a powerful navy. It is urged that the compulsory army service tends to the depopulation of the country districts, and inclines young men towards sedentary professions already overcrowded, whilst a considerable residuum drifts into idleness or vice. It is far otherwise with those

who serve in the navy. These, on the completion of their service, furnish to the mercantile marine a useful body of seamen, stokers, and engineers. In supposing that this is also the case in England, M. de Lanessan is mistaken. Scarcely one man in twenty after leaving the British Navy takes service in our merchant fleet. The conditions of service in his Majesty's ships differ so widely from those prevailing in the mercantile marine, that the clean and trim British man-of-war's man will, on leaving the service, rather do anything than join a merchant ship.

Whilst the Russian alliance is said to give France greater security on the Continent, it is pointed out that the Russian fleet in European waters is inconsiderable, and therefore, in case of war with England, France would have to rely mainly on her own unaided sea power. Not that hostility to England is advocated,—it is rather urged that an *entente* is desirable,—but, “seeing that England reserves her sympathies and respect exclusively for the strong (!), it is on this account most necessary for France to have a powerful fleet.”

The question of the constitution of the French fleet, both that now existing and that which it is proposed to build up, is gone into at great length. In the limited space at our disposal there is much that cannot be dealt with; but the whole is well worth reading, even by the man in the street. In France, as on this side of the Channel, the gun is considered to have

thoroughly established its superiority to the ram and torpedo. Therefore large ships with steady gun-platforms are preferable to a larger number of smaller ones. And the gun being so important, it is absolutely necessary to give it good protection against hostile projectiles: this entails a heavy weight of armour. And lastly, great offensive and defensive force is useless without the power of rapid movement to enable an enemy to be brought to action with certainty, whilst there must be an adequate supply of fuel to give a sufficient radius of action without recoaling. One of the most important points for the taxpayer with reference to these large ships is their great cost, and this M. de Lanessan faces fairly. In our own Estimates the “cost” of a ship excludes the armament; and since this very essential portion of a modern battleship's equipment costs at least a quarter of a million, this is a somewhat material omission. However, when all is taken into account, there is no doubt that the French ships are more costly than ours. Thus we have no battleship building which is likely to cost £1,420,000, except possibly the King Edward, which is somewhat more powerful than the French République, which is to cost the above sum. Nor will the cost of our Drake class amount to £1,170,000, which is the bill that the French taxpayer will have to pay for the armoured cruiser Léon Gambetta. In the last twelve years the cost of a first-class battleship has increased 50 per cent, and that

of a first-class armoured cruiser 100 per cent. Most of the expense is for labour, either at the place of building or the steel works. So that if a ship is very costly, it means that a greater number of men are employed in her construction; and since no more than a certain number can be employed on one and the same ship at the same time, increased cost means that additional time is required for building. And it is a fact that French ships take longer to build than our own.

Unlike many of the writers on both sides of the Channel, our author is by no means in favour of small displacements. Indeed he points out that many existing ships would have been much improved if a greater displacement had been allowed to the designer. Here every practical seaman will most cordially agree with him. The big ship as a rule gives very little trouble: her defect list is relatively small, and she is always ready for service. The small cramped ships, whether battleships or cruisers, in which the displacement has been cut down, are generally unsatisfactory to work. Nor does the mere displacement give a true measure of what may be expected from a ship. It is quite possible, with a given sum of money, to build a vessel of greater displacement than a rival ship which costs exactly the same and takes the same time to build. If these two ships are of the same fighting power, the common practice is to condemn the heavier ship as inferior to her lighter rival; whereas the advantage really lies in the opposite direction,

for the heavier ship will almost inevitably behave better at sea and be more serviceable all round. Most foreigners, and many of our own critics, condemn our ships because they are somewhat heavier than their foreign rivals, even though they cost less, are quicker built, and are of about the same fighting power. De Lanessan does not fall into any such error.

As to how the fighting power of a ship should be determined, the critics will always differ. Still, most will agree that it can scarcely be decided without carefully considering the duty that the ship has to perform, taking into consideration the position of her nation, both geographical and political. This is sometimes forgotten in comparing ship with ship, but no such error is made by our author. He continually returns to the question of the services required from the ships that he proposes to build, and is insistent on the fact that a sound building programme must be co-ordinated with a sound naval policy. The new French battleships are designed to take the offensive, and especially to take their place in attacking a hostile fleet in the open sea. For this purpose it is not only necessary that guns of great power should be carried, but that their protection should also be efficient. The author considers that the power of the four heaviest guns of a battleship should be such as to enable her to pierce the thickest armour of the enemy at a moderate range, and points out that the 12-inch gun which is approved for the new French

battleships meets these requirements. He strongly condemns the German 9·4-inch gun as being unequal to its task, for one of the new French battleships, with her 12-inch guns protected by 12-inch armour, could easily pierce the 9-inch plating of the German Wittelsbach class; whilst the latter, with nothing heavier than the 9·4-inch gun, could not pierce the protection of the French ship. And any smaller gun than the 12-inch would be inadequate, and a plate thinner than 12 inches would be insufficient. At the same time, it is necessary for the Germans to keep down the displacement of their ships owing to the shallow water that borders their coasts, so that a larger ship than the Wittelsbach might be scarcely possible. As the 12-inch is essentially the gun to which we have always adhered, our author is thus entirely in agreement with our latest designs.

It is interesting to note, in connection with this criticism, that the latest German ships, the particulars of which were approved in 1902, are to carry 11-inch guns in lieu of 9·4-inch; but the displacement having to be kept down to 13,000 tons, the thickness of the armour is still inadequate. With reference to the contention that a thinly armoured battleship might gain an advantage over a heavier ship of less speed, it is pithily noted that although evasion may save a ship from defeat and capture, it can never give victory to the fleet or vessel that practises it.

Whilst it is easy to agree with the statement that battle-

ships are meant to fight their like in fleet actions at sea, there are other uses to which it is proposed to put them that are more open to question. For example, it is urged that if a squadron of transports were required to cross from Algeria to France, or *vice versa*, they should be accompanied by a battle-fleet. With a weaker force, such as that of a squadron of armoured cruisers, it is contended that the escort would be defeated and the convoy destroyed. But unless the battleships were superior to the enemy's fleet on the spot, they too would be defeated, and if superior, their rôle would evidently be to seek out and destroy their opponents without dragging a convoy about with them. For running the gauntlet, if that is desired, the most suitable force would consist of fast mail steamers escorted by armoured cruisers. Such a force would evade all battleships by superior speed, and might very probably beat off a cruiser attack, unless indeed there were sufficient armoured cruisers in the enemy's force to catch and overpower the escort. In such an extreme case fast steamers unaccompanied by any escort, sailing and arriving by night, would generally get through. It is a pity to weaken a good case by trying to prove too much, and though it is wisely contended by our author that heavy battleships are unsuited for commerce attack, it is somewhat far-fetched to assert that they are needed for attacking coast batteries or protecting a disembarkation on a hostile shore. Neither of these operations is

desirable or likely until the hostile fleets are swept from the sea, but once this is effected a very modest force would cover a disembarkation. It is quite sufficient to say that without a strong force of battleships the seas cannot be kept clear, or even be crossed in safety, and it is evident enough that the provision of such a force implies an intention to contend for the command of the sea, and this is practically the kernel of the whole matter.

The examination of the British battle-fleet is not very detailed or exhaustive; but it is perfectly apparent that the weak points of our ships are thoroughly well known at the French Admiralty. Thus the Royal Sovereign class are condemned for their inadequate speed—namely, 16 knots—as compared with the 17½ knots which they were designed to attain. The lack of protection of their guns is commented on: this has, however, been partially remedied since by the provision of extra casemates for the upper-deck 6-inch guns. But the exposure of the 13.5-inch guns when loading still remains. Again, the poor water-line protection of the twelve battleships of the Canopus and Duncan classes is pointed out as a serious defect, rendering them liable to be penetrated by the medium guns of the new French ships. So far as concerns the 6½-inch French gun this is incorrect. But it is perfectly true that both the Duncan and Canopus might easily get a French 12-inch armour-piercing shell into the engine or boiler-room at something like 4000

yards' range, the belt, even when reinforced by coal and armour deck, being insufficient to keep out such a projectile.

De Lanessan appositely enough takes the opportunity, when considering these thinly belted battleships, to enlarge on the text that great displacement is necessary for efficiency, and he condemns the British Admiralty for saddling their fleets with a number of ships which, given equality of *personnel*, could not stand up against the heavy French battleship of 14,865 tons. In justice to our Admiralty it must, however, be pointed out that the ships thus stigmatised are already completed, whilst the six French ships with which they are compared will not all be finished until 1907 at the earliest. And by that time we shall have from eight to ten ships of the Prince of Wales, King Edward, and New Zealand classes, which should be fully equal, if not superior, to their French rivals. Not that the comparison is generally unfairly made. With great frankness our author acknowledges that, in comparing ships of similar ages, the faults of British ships are balanced by those of their French rivals in such a way that neither side has much solid ground for fault-finding. All he urges is that with higher displacements the ships would have been better on both sides of the Channel.

It is most interesting to note that, in reviewing the position in Europe, he contends that on the day of the outbreak of war with a great Continental sea

power England would be at a disadvantage, owing to the extent of her interests, both territorial and commercial. With Egypt, Malta, and Gibraltar to be guarded, a powerful force required in the Channel to prevent a landing, her commerce crying out for protection in all parts of the world, England would need a larger force of battleships than a Continental rival. Granted that there is some force in this contention, it cannot be altogether conceded. There is no necessity—in fact, it would be extremely bad strategy—to cut up a large fleet into a number of squadrons to be distributed at various bases. If an enemy went to the Levant, whether to attack Egypt or otherwise, a sufficient force would follow him; but as long as our opponent's ships remained to the westward ours would remain there too.

It is most curious that so many writers lose sight of the extraordinary mobility of a modern fleet. In old days, when it took a month to get from England to the Mediterranean, and when calms or foul winds might cause a fleet to go less than one-third the speed of a rival which had originally but a short start, there was some chance that considerable damage could be done by an evading expedition before the pursuing fleet could come up. But the difficulty of landing and the time taken to carry out any serious operation—such as the capture of Santiago, for example—is quite as great as ever. The introduction of smokeless powder and the repeating rifle, by aiding

the defence, makes it more difficult to obtain a decisive success in a brief period than it was a hundred years ago. Thus Egypt could well be left to itself for a few days, and its defenders could count with certainty on the arrival of our fleet long before their power of resistance was exhausted.

There is also the stumbling-block caused by the Straits of Gibraltar to any plan of concentration prepared by the French. A narrow strait such as this is the very place in which the torpedo should demonstrate its value. It is urged by the French, and with good reason, that the torpedo is of the greatest assistance to the force that desires to make certain localities especially dangerous to an opponent's heavy ships. Moreover, the advent of the submarine has increased the menace of the torpedo. The fast but weak torpedo-boat stands no chance in the daytime if she gets within range of a well-armed enemy. Her opportunity comes by night. So that a squadron desiring to force a passage through a strait occupied by torpedo craft of the ordinary type would take care to go through by daylight, when the guns of the heavy ships would give security to the fleet that carried them. The submarine is quite as invisible by day when just below the surface, with her periscope above water, as the ordinary torpedo-boat on a dark night. Therefore, with a narrow passage held by submarines during the day and by ordinary torpedo-boats at night,

it is by no means easy to get through unscathed. Under modern conditions Brest is much nearer to Toulon than it was of old, but Gibraltar is more difficult to pass than ever. It is much easier for a British fleet from Portland to join one from Malta than it is for the French Brest fleet to meet their colleagues from Toulon. In a lesser degree Malta stands between Toulon and Sevastopol. The Malta channel, however, is a hundred miles wide, and the strait between Sicily and Cape Bon is flanked by Tunis and Bizerta, so that torpedo craft working from Malta are at a very considerable disadvantage.

De Lanessan devotes a great deal of space to cruisers and their duties. The question of a scout pure and simple has apparently been shelved in France. Russia has completed the Novik, which, in order to attain 25 knots, has the horsepower of the fastest battleship in a vessel less than one-fifth of the battleship's displacement; and since the Novik's completion the Russians have started the building of two other similar craft, so that apparently they consider the experiment a success. But no one has followed them yet, though our four scouts, just ordered, are somewhat of the same type, and their Western ally is one of those who are waiting to see whether the reputed 25 knots, or anything near it, will really be obtained at sea. In England, France, and the United States there is an enormous gap between the heavy - armoured cruisers, costing one million or

more, and the destroyer, which may cost £70,000, but in the last three years there has been almost a complete cessation from building anything to fill the gap. It is perhaps more marked in France than anywhere, and no one can say that she has not the courage of her opinions. Out of the thirty millions sterling which France has spent or contemplates spending on building between 1898 and 1906, more than twenty-nine are devoted to very large ships, or to the flimsy little destroyers and torpedo craft, whilst ships of medium size have quite disappeared from the lists of those under construction. The medium-sized ship was first a protected cruiser, and later an armoured cruiser. They both fall short in speed, so much so that the up-to-date big battleship can often catch them, and they have no chance whatever with the modern armoured cruiser, which can run them down and capture or sink them with but little risk to herself. On the other hand, the destroyer utilises her speed during the daytime to evade a heavier enemy, whilst at night her small size would enable her to creep up to a big opponent unseen and sink her by a torpedo. The torpedo-boat is no more a match for the destroyer than is the medium-sized protected cruiser for the armoured cruiser. She is very much slower, less seaworthy, and her gun-power is practically nil. So she can do nothing by day. At night she is less visible than the destroyer, and being cheaper, may be

built in greater numbers; but as she is much less seaworthy, it is very probable that, even if a large number are available, very few will reach the scene of action at the right time. Still, France believes in them for the defence of her harbours, and is building about twelve per annum. But few torpedo-boats are being built elsewhere, and those under construction are so large as almost to be called small destroyers.

When in 1907 we see the result of the present building programme in France, it will be found that the active sea-going French Navy will consist of eighteen large battleships, of all ages up to fifteen years, eighteen large armoured cruisers, none of them more than about seven years old, and six smaller ones, all over twelve years old and too slow. Besides the armoured ships there will be thirty-four protected cruisers, of which the newest is some six years old, and the oldest sixteen years, and from forty to fifty destroyers. This fleet will be about half Great Britain's fleet at the same period. In addition, France will have about a dozen small or very old battleships, of very doubtful value, too slow to co-operate with the more modern ships, too weak to take up a position in line, and carrying too little coal to undertake any lengthened cruise. These ships, together with 200 torpedo-boats and some forty submarines, may be relegated to coast-defence work, which, so far as

the slow battleships are concerned, would mean taking shelter from a more powerful battleship in some roadstead, or sallying out therefrom in company with similar ships, only to demonstrate the fact that superior numbers will not avail to bring a faster enemy to action. The torpedo craft might take the offensive at night, and the submarines would certainly make it decidedly uncomfortable for any ship that chased a coast-defence vessel into waters where there were numbers of these unpleasant novelties dotted about. But, on the whole, it is the thirty-six big armoured ships, with perhaps the destroyers, that De Lanessan hopes will make France respected by her neighbours.

It has often been urged by French writers that should France be involved in hostilities with Great Britain, the latter could be brought to sue for peace if her gigantic commerce was assailed. These writers point to the latter days of Louis XIV., when, although the French fleets found it undesirable to put to sea, the commerce-raiders and privateers reaped a rich harvest, and British ships in numbers were brought as prizes into French ports. With the modern extension of commerce, say the writers, Great Britain's trade is far more valuable than of old, and if great results were obtained by a *guerre de course* two hundred years ago, what might not be expected now? A statement of this kind should be carefully examined in view of the

altered conditions of the present day; and in treating of cruisers and their duties, whether to raid on commerce or to work with the battle fleet, our author does not neglect to look diligently into all the circumstances of the case—both with reference to past wars and present conditions. To begin with, though it is incontestable that England suffered severely from the commerce-raiders, and never succeeded in clearing the sea of her tormentors, still her commerce continued, and even increased, whilst that of France dwindled, and wellnigh disappeared. English merchants and shippers were, at any rate, able to do business, and willingly faced the risks in consideration of the profits to be earned. On the other hand, the French traders dared not put to sea, and the profits made by the sale of prizes did not countervail the losses due to the destruction of trade.

In order to support his contention for large ships and an active offensive strategy, De Lanessan tries to prove from history that British commerce suffered most when France was able to keep the sea with considerable fleets—especially towards the close of the seventeenth century and in the war of the American Revolution, 1778-83. Admitting the fact, it is by no means clear that he is justified in saying that it was the strength of the French battle-fleets that so distressed the commerce of England. Not only were the French strong in ships "fit to lie in the line," but also in frigates,

small cruisers, and privateers. It was these last that committed such depredations. And the advocates of medium cruisers for the *guerre de cause* might well say that the point rather tells in favour of their argument for the building of numbers of corsair cruisers, even at the expense of weakening the battle-line. But, as a matter of fact, no nation has ever adopted the last-mentioned policy with success. The weakening of the battle-line has almost always coincided with a reduction of the number of ships maintained at sea, and De Lanessan is absolutely justified in his contention that, speaking generally, a strong fighting fleet and determined attacks upon commerce have been concomitants in a successful, or fairly successful, maritime war.

There are few better expositions of the value of torpedo craft than that set forth by our author. So many wild statements have been made on both sides of the Channel as to the great power or fatal weakness of these craft, that it is refreshing to have the pros and cons soberly set down. Beginning with the torpedo-boat, we too have found that on a rough day nothing at all can be done, and that at all times the radius of action is very small. Besides which, during daylight it is impossible to approach the ship which it is desired to attack, and it is difficult to find her at night. Again, when found, it may not be possible to get near

her if she is going at a good speed; for with a torpedo-boat the reserve of speed is so small as compared with a battleship, that a stern chase is not only long but hopeless. The effort to increase speed will almost certainly induce flaming at the funnels, and then a few rounds from a quick-firing gun will sink her. However, where it is a case of scattering a number of boats about in narrow waters, as in the approaches to a harbour, cheapness is essential, or the number must be reduced. This is the main *raison d'être* for the torpedo-boat: she is used where it is important to prevent the enemy from passing, and, if possible, where the water is fairly smooth; she is very effective when she can get to close quarters on a dark night, and her moral effect is great. Her small size also makes her superior to the destroyer for sneaking into an enemy's harbour unseen; but, owing to her lack of speed, her chance of escape is less if she is seen and attacked, either before or after she fires her torpedo. For eight years Great Britain built no torpedo-boats at all. We are now building four or five a-year of a specially large type of boat, which, being about 200 tons, is more than twice the size of the ordinary *torpilleur* of which the French have always been fond, and of which they have built about a hundred in the last ten years, besides thirty or so of the *haute mer* boats, which are somewhat smaller than those we are building.

The weakness of the torpedo-boat by day has caused the development of the submarine: "To protect our ports and coasts against the attempts of the enemy's fleets, by extending the defence as far as possible to seaward; also to attack the enemy near his own coasts, at the entry, or even within, his own ports." As compared with the torpedo-boat, the submarine is at a great disadvantage as regards speed. Her radius of action is no greater, if as good. She is probably no better in bad weather. Her one advantage, and that an important one, is that she is practically invisible and invulnerable when approaching to the attack. But her approach is so slow that a ship steaming fast has little to fear unless her course takes her close to the submarine. In order to increase the chance that an enemy will run unknowingly within range of the torpedo from a submarine, these latter must be multiplied. De Lanessan proposed for this purpose to produce small and cheap submarines in considerable numbers; but the completion of these craft has been delayed by his successor, M. Pelletan, who has declared that their value is very doubtful. They were, it is understood, to be propelled by electricity only, which entails pretty frequent returns to harbour, or the replenishment of the storage batteries by a friendly ship. In the Holland pattern boat with which we are experimenting, and in the larger French boats already in use in the Channel, a gasoline engine runs the boat when on

the surface, where all the fighting is done; and when she dives in order to escape, an electric motor is used, which is worked by storage batteries which can be charged by the same engine that drives her. This class of craft will doubtless supersede the torpedo-boat for sneaking into harbours and for holding narrow waters during the daytime; but her speed is so poor—say, 10 knots only—that unless her prey is at anchor or steams close past the spot where she is lying, she has very little chance of being close enough to get in her torpedo.

Although De Lanessan's successor is not pushing on with the building programme with any energy, the naval policy advocated by the former is being pursued so far as concerns the stationing of the main battle-fleet of France in the Mediterranean and the armoured cruisers in the Channel and Atlantic ports, these latter being supported by a squadron of some of the older battleships which are scarcely up to Mediterranean form. It is not made clear, however, how these slow vessels are to support their faster fellows. If the fast ships use their speed on a cruise, they must needs leave their slower consorts; and unless the latter run on a predetermined track, they cannot be found when it is desired to fall back.

In some recent manoeuvres the slow ships were found to be such a drag that in more than one instance they were left behind in harbour, and it is extremely doubtful if the officer

in command of the fast French squadron would care to be hampered by the slow ships. A proportion of the armoured cruisers are also to be sent abroad, so as to act from such distant bases as Saigon, Diégo Suarez (Madagascar), and Dakar (west coast of Africa). Others are apparently to act with the main battle-fleet in the Mediterranean, and when we come to consider that there are to be only eighteen really first-class cruisers, their numbers in any one place cannot be very great. A building programme in which the ships, as distinct from mere boats, cost at the very least a full million apiece, must entail very small numbers. If other nations adhere to this building policy, the war ships capable of keeping the sea will become fewer and fewer. There will be swarms of torpedo-craft, both surface and submarine, haunting the various coasts and straits, but the open sea will be comparatively clear of all fighting ships. Is the destroyer, which has now reached 600 tons, going to develop into an engine for the attack and defence of commerce? Or will the better class of merchant steamers be so modified in design as to be quickly converted into cruisers with sufficient fighting power? At very modest expense a merchant steamer can be so armed as to be capable of beating off a destroyer, so that the new medium-sized vessels must be both fairly powerful and extremely fast. Does the Russian cruiser Novik meet the case, and if so what is likely to

be the cost of such vessels, not only to build but to man, maintain, and keep in repair? These are some of the questions which require solution. The first cost of a battleship or big cruiser is very formidable, but the bill for repairs and maintenance is relatively modest when compared with that of the high-speed small cruiser.

Again, there is the question of *personnel*—a most important one. The big ships will not require a very large staff of officers relatively to the greater number of smaller ships which they replace. The smaller vessels, such as destroyers and torpedo craft, will be almost all engines. It is perfectly evident, therefore, that the tendency will be towards a large number of young officers for the smaller ships, who must have a good technical training, whilst the big ship commands will be few but of great importance. There must be many disappointed men and a tendency to stagnation in promotion. Still, there should be a wide area for selection. If that selection be wisely made the results should be good, but it will require great firmness and absolute fairness, so that the right men may be chosen for the important commands.

De Lanessan is well satisfied with the French method of entering and training officers, which entails joining the navy comparatively late; whilst on this side of the Channel we are face to face with a new education scheme introduced by Lord Selborne, in which the great feature is the very early

entry. By this scheme all officers (save the surgeons and paymasters) will be entered at the age of 12½, and will serve together for four years in a gigantic training establishment, or, more probably, first in one establishment and then in a second. These schools will be on shore, and there may or may not be cruises in torpedo craft or other special vessels. Even with two schools it seems likely that the numbers will rise as high as 600 in each; but this will depend somewhat on the proportion who are sifted out before the four years have expired. Little boys of 12½ cannot be satisfactorily tested by competitive examination, and the service will suffer unless a reserve of something like 25 per cent are entered, and that number of the least fit are allowed or compelled to drop out during the four years. At 16½ all go to sea, but whether on the same basis as the present midshipmen or under special tutelage has not been announced. At any rate, all instruction is to be given by the ships' officers, and not by naval instructors. At present the Britannia and all schoolboy training is left behind at 16½; but a naval instructor is provided, so that the midshipman may continue his studies at sea. Unless the new schools turn out very superior to the present Britannia and the various establishments preparatory thereto, there is no certainty that the new mid. will have more zeal for knowledge than the old. Very much will depend on the tone of the new schools, and more

still on the drastic weeding-out of the least fit. If there is no failure in either respect, there is good hope that the continuous course will prove more satisfactory than the tripartite arrangement of preparatory school, crammer, and Britannia, which fill the four years from $12\frac{1}{2}$ to $16\frac{1}{2}$ of the present-day midshipman.

We have for many years differed entirely from other navies, and to a great extent from other professions, in giving our young officers responsible work in command of men at a very early age. In France, Germany, and the United States the embryo naval officer goes up for the navy at about the same age that the English boy leaves a public school or enters the army. He then has a three to four years' course of instruction, partly ashore and partly at sea, and does not become an officer till 21 to 23. By our new scheme not only do the executive line go to sea for general ship duties at $16\frac{1}{2}$, but as separate entry for the marines' and engineers' is abolished, the cadets who are being trained for these two branches also go to sea for nearly three years as midshipmen, from $16\frac{1}{2}$ to $19\frac{1}{2}$. At the latter age they return to the shore again and have a year's training, during which they are crammed and examined in (1) scholastic subjects, (2) pilotage, (3) gunnery, (4) torpedo. Finally, at the age of 20 to 21 the young officers are divided off into executives, engineers, and ma-

rines. The former go straight to sea as sub-lieutenants or lieutenants, but the latter receive from two to three years' more training, and do not get afloat as really efficient officers till the ages 22-24. Every navy in the world gets its officers fairly launched before this, but the American officers are nearly as old. On the other hand, our executive officers are launched at 20-21, which fairly corresponds to the age prevalent in other navies and in the liberal professions. Our French rivals contend for their system that their officers are *très instruit*, their school-work, followed by the stiff course in the training-ships Borda and Iphigénie, giving them an extremely thorough mental training. They consider our methods too haphazard, and that the youngsters, after leaving the Britannia, moving from ship to ship during their three years' spell at sea, and then returning to school again, do not get a fair chance of acquiring knowledge during the most receptive period of their lives. It is also said that they lose the habit of steady application, which is one of the most valuable fruits of a sound education. The three years at sea is distinctly a testing time, and some come badly out of it; but others not only acquire knowledge, but learn to manage men, which is far more important. There is, therefore, the more need for a careful sifting in the preliminary training, so as to eliminate the lazy and inefficient, who, whilst they are at sea, forget the little they

once knew, and do not become good officers. For the diligent and capable the sea training should not much interfere with the course of their studies. Still, three years without a special instructor in scholastic work will rather tend to lower the present standard, which is none too high, unless the new schools turn out lads of very exceptional zeal and energy.

The French, too, have their engineering difficulty; but at present they have no idea whatever of turning into *mécaniciens* any of their *très instruit* young officers from the Borda. They seem quite content that all their engineer officers should be drawn from the petty-officer rank. Thus, says De Lanessan, "all our engineer officers have a consummate knowledge of all that has to do with engines." The difficulty in France is, that they do not get enough satisfactory candidates for entry. The engineering business in France is relatively a small one, and the French naval authorities talk of special training classes for lads to fit them for entry into the navy as engineer officers. Holding, as they do, that the engineer should stick tight to his engine when he is growing up, they would not agree with our new scheme, by which it is arranged that the engineer officer does not seriously take up engineering till he is twenty years of age. Indeed there is some risk that our new engineers, unless

they comprise many of the most capable of their compeers, may find themselves inferior in practical knowledge to the artificer-engineer who will work under them, and who, like the French *mécaniciens*, have forced their way up from a lower social stratum by good brains and hard work.

It is not so long ago that it was considered rank heresy to look abroad for any hints as to the direction in which progress should be made in our navy. The Intelligence Department has not been going twenty years, and prior to that the average naval officer was content to repose peacefully in the absolute certainty that the British Navy was the fount and centre of all wisdom and knowledge, so that not only did inquiries as to the ideas of our neighbours show a very improper spirit, but time devoted to studying their methods was absolutely wasted. We now meet many who take the opposite and most pessimistic view, that we are dropping behind the times. Whilst most fully admitting that there is much to learn across the Channel and Atlantic, I do not for one moment admit that the aspect for our navy is a depressing one. That we have faults is undoubted, but we are progressing steadily, looking our faults fairly in the face, and have every reason to be hopeful for the future.

ACTIVE LIST.

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THE DELHI DURBAR: A RETROSPECT.

IT is not often given to the finite power of man to attain complete success in any undertaking: "L'homme propose, mais Dieu dispose" is an adage so constantly exemplified in human affairs as to have become a truism. When, therefore, a great idea has been carried out with all the completeness and all the grandeur of its original conception, when not a single mishap nor discordant note has marred the triumphant consummation of a scheme which has demanded months of anxious forethought and the harmonious collaboration of many assistants, in such a case the individual whose master-mind originated the plan and directed every detail of the preparation may indeed congratulate himself on having been favoured by fortune beyond what an ordinary

mortal could have dared to expect. Such must have been the happy frame of mind of Lord Curzon of Kedleston as his train steamed out of Delhi station on the morning of January 10. The present Viceroy of India has all his life been accounted a fortunate man, but never has this enviable characteristic been more strongly exemplified than during the first fortnight of the present year. Not only have the great pageants and ceremonials with which was celebrated the proclamation of his Majesty Edward VII. as Emperor of India passed off with a smoothness which could hardly have been counted upon had months of rehearsal been possible, but even the elements were in their kindest mood: bright sunshine and cool breezes made life in the great

CEDRIC.

PART I.

HE led what some lady novelist has called a "man's life." In so much he was a man. To the ordinary eye there was nothing in him, and it is but fair to state that this view included his own self-estimate. He saw nothing in himself. This was perhaps because he had never taken the trouble to look at himself except in the glass, where he saw only beautiful waistcoats neatly framed in the best of other clothes. His politics consisted of counting himself one of many who held fief rights from the house of Cecil, and of having the same sort of admiration for Mr Chamberlain that some mining populations have for a bruiser who, with his hands tied behind his back, will fight any dog put opposite to him. He gave ten pounds a-year to charities, which was very good of him, seeing that his income was only about a thousand a-year, and his club subscription ten guineas. He was not one of those men who fume about, and lament their ignorance of, what to do with themselves. Distinctly otherwise. His time was fully occupied. He was always going somewhere, or doing something. There really hardly seemed to be any time that might be called "on his hands." He was seldom bored, mostly just placid, and in London had the slightest tinge of comfortable hurry. Men who

had been out in, and down into, the world, and knew things with their clothes off, and who generally hate his kind, had a strange unaccountable liking for him. Two or three of this sort were really quite fond of him. When the war in South Africa broke out he became quietly curious about the sort of thing war was, and concerning it tentatively questioned soldier friends who had seen active service. As may be expected, he got very little information upon which to build up any vivid impression. Some said it was overrated; others that it was jolly good fun—at times. A man who had lost an arm and considered himself adequately paid with a shilling's-worth of bronze, opined that it was better than steeplechasing at first, but that it palled after a while. On being pressed, this man acknowledged that steeplechasing, when kept up day and night for a year, might also pall. He didn't know, but it might.

He, our hero, weighed nigh upon fourteen stone; in training he had been only just twelve. Hanging round the walls of his dining-room were many oars and sculls, the emblems of prowess now ten years past. These were the most impressive witnesses of their owner's strength, for an oar shut up in a room, especially an oar whose blade is dec-

orated with golden names on a blue background, grows—as an impression of strenuousness—as an elephant does if shut up in a cage only just large enough to hold him. And yet it never occurred to the owner that these oars were constant large interrogations as to how he had followed up the glory with which they had been associated.

He moved about from the houses of his own relations to the houses of other people's relations, and was always welcome. This was because he never made any fuss as long as there was plenty to eat and drink, and because he would always talk to anybody that he was told to talk to, an accomplishment he had mastered by discovering the difficulty of ending a conversation if he confined himself to saying nothing but "Yes" here, "No" there, and "Do you really think so?" at odd times. He had picked up the last from a High Church parson, and it had renewed the faith in religion of his extreme youth.

He was a tall man, fair, and of course large: generally speaking, he looked and moved like Cedric the Saxon pushed up through the centuries into a frock-coat and top-hat. Polo at Hurlingham stood for the lists, where he lazily looked on at the achievements of others; for himself he nowadays seldom set lance at, or on, rest of a more dangerous description than a billiard-cue.

With the exception of a few vehement strugglers who occasionally grab the big things of

life, we are all more or less creatures of environment: witness the number of people who have become quite skilled engineers merely because they found themselves surrounded by money, time, and motor-cars. Cedric—let his name stand at that—was surrounded by a certain class of comfort, and took it, not ungratefully, for what it was worth. He was not without brains, it is evident, for it has been mentioned how he mastered the art of conversation. This particular accomplishment also showed that he possessed the quality of self-repression, a quality that in an apathetic nature is liable to run to light-hiding under the bushel of ease. He had tasted of one kind of success, and when he found that even a congratulatory poem in 'Punch' concerning one of his river victories did not stir him to anything more than a good-natured tolerance of the popular effusion, he concluded, as he allowed his quiet blue eyes to wander over and into other successful people, that he at any rate was not going to suffer from swollen head. He saw that the enlarged heads resultant of multitudinous back-patting lapsed speedily to their normal size when the patting passed on to other backs, and that the owners strove, each in his particular line, for further application of the dorsal massage that had such an intoxicating effect upon their heads. Eventually they were entitled successful men. Now, swollen head is a thing without which Britons would never have come

proved in spirit as much as in physical powers by active service, and this effect has not been wanting in the case of the Imperial Service regiments. Lord Curzon's genius is able to realise fully the value of this incentive to healthy loyalty which was bequeathed to the Indian Government by Lord Dufferin, just as he is equally alive to the debt which the British Indian Empire owes to Lord Lytton's Imperial assemblage. No one has been more forward to give the Imperial Service troops opportunities for earning laurels in the field, and we have not the smallest hesitation in asserting that the genuine personal loyalty with which the great princes of India listened to the Viceroy's words and to his Majesty's message on the 1st of January is largely due to the feeling of unity engendered by the successful accomplishment of Lord Dufferin's scheme, and to the far-seeing appreciation which that scheme has received at the hands of Lord Curzon.

An interesting feature of the ceremonials at Delhi was the first public appearance of the Imperial Cadet Corps, the formation of which is yet another step in the direction of identifying the great houses of India with the British Government. This idea owes its conception and execution entirely to the present Viceroy, who lately spoke of the corps as "a very dear child of mine." The scheme is yet in its early infancy, and it is impossible to say how much or how little it may effect. The little band

of young nobles looked very smart and picturesque as they rode in the State processions on their black chargers with shabracques of white fur, and with their uniforms of white and gold, and pale-blue *lungis* tied in the Rajput fashion; and for the reason that they caught the eye they were loudly applauded by the spectators, who never, with one or two exceptions, seemed to have any better reason for bestowing applause than delight at some novel or specially pleasing appearance, and who gave their plaudits with equal freedom to the gorgeously clad herald or to a gilded Noah's ark drawn by elephants. But if the Imperial Cadet Corps is to effect much, it must be equal to something more than making a brave show in a state procession. What its results may be in the way of fitting its members for military employment time alone can show: meanwhile it may be conceded that it justifies its existence, even if it only succeeds in giving a healthy training and a love of a healthy life to a number of young men who, by circumstances and traditional custom, are specially exposed to great temptations.

There is another aspect of the assemblage at Delhi which has not been touched upon, but which is nevertheless deserving of notice—namely, its influence on the British officials amongst the spectators. Lord Curzon alluded to this in his speech in Council last summer, when he spoke of the "water-tight - compartment system"

under which the Government of the country is to a great extent administered. The distances from Madras to the United Provinces, or from Bengal to the Punjab, are so great that, notwithstanding the facilities of communication, the tendency is for an officer of the civil administration to pass all his Indian service in his own province, only leaving it for occasional holidays to England. Many a district officer of the Punjab knows as little about the people and the general point of view in Madras as he does of New Zealand. A gathering which brings together the Government officials of every province of India helps to break through this watertight-compartment feature of life in this country, and cannot but be of advantage to all. Not only is the interchange of ideas on matters of detail a valuable experience, but in a still wider sense the local officers of the various Governments gain breadth of view at such an assembly. The devotion of the Indian Civil Service to duty is justly celebrated, and is characteristic of the British race at its best. But another characteristic equally universal amongst average British minds is a sturdy dislike of anything having the semblance of theatrical display or of fancifulness. The "Imperial idea" is foreign to the British race as a whole, ably though its aims may be furthered by the solid loyal work of British officials throughout the world. It is found only here and there,

as, for instance, in Lord Beaconsfield, who was not British at all; in Lord Lytton, whose ways were singularly un-British; or in Lord Curzon, whose ability and foresight enable him to overcome racial characteristics in favour of what he is justly persuaded is for the advantage of the Empire. It is this idea which is fostered by a great Imperial gathering. The local official is brought out of his parochial surroundings, and learns by ocular demonstration, and by the spoken words of a great statesman, that something more than conscientious plodding labour is required to build up and maintain such an empire as that of the British in India; that, important and necessary as is careful devotion to the details of local administration, such qualities and such work are a means to an end; and that the end is only to be obtained by a broad-minded sympathy which will subordinate local interests to the advantage of the Empire as a whole.

Mention has already been made of the extraordinary smoothness which characterised the great functions. It is well known in India that the Viceroy himself can primarily claim credit for this satisfactory completion of all the arrangements: it has for months been common talk that he has found time in the midst of his other arduous duties to give careful thought to every detail, from the plans and drawings of the Art Exhibition buildings to the ordering of the processions, and even

nor had it occurred to him that she might have thought of it for him. By the light of the change that had swept over him, she seemed suddenly to be above all things desirable, so there came that into his voice and manner that made the heart of the heiress beat high with hope. He knew no more than the girl by his side of the details of war, but dimly and in the rough he understood the thing he had made up his mind to do. It was to leave the place and the surroundings where men were all about the same, and to go where they were either one thing or the other,—either brave men or cowards, greedy for their bodies and pockets, or lavish with the sacrifice of both; it was to find the man under the clothes. He had been possessed with the desire to discover himself—his power, or the lack of it.

Cedric stirred in his seat, for to his quickened perception had come the knowledge that he had won the love of the lady who was listening to him, and that he had but to ask in order to receive.

And now he was going away.

It was into a general pause that his voice fell: he looked up and around, half amused, half defiant, recognising that he had been heard by everybody.

"I have booked a passage to the Cape," he had said.

There was a second or two of astonished silence, then everybody spoke at once except the girl for whom the words had been meant, without whose presence he had never spoken them, and who, by a suddenly

apparent sense of duty, he had felt should be made aware of his intention as quickly as possible.

"I don't know," he said slowly, in answer to the average meaning of the table-full of inquiry that was hurled at him, "what I'm going to do. I should like to see something of what's going on. . . . No, I don't suppose I shall be of any use; it's rather late in the day for anything of that sort—for me." This was slightly bitter, and entirely unlike the Cedric of pre-Colenso times. He never remembered hating anything so much as that all this attention should have been drawn to his scheme. He had meant only that the girl should hear, and had felt sure she would understand; felt sure that there would have been no need to tell her that he did really mean to try to be of some use. He would even have told her something of the things that had been working in his mind all day, which he could not himself recognise distinctly, in that they were the foretaste of the weird, lustful joy that is brought to its consummation by the sights and sounds of battle.

"I shan't see you again before I go. . . . Good-bye."

"Good-bye, good luck, and come back safe to . . ."

"To what?" Something in the tone of her unfinished faltering transformed Cedric into the primeval wooer. All day long he had been the mere primeval man of war with nothing to make war upon, and here was the most beautiful of women

ready, at any rate metaphorically, to throw herself at his feet. . . . Very well, she should do so; then he would pick her up, take her to himself, and love her for ever.

She still hesitated.

"Why come back?" he said insistently, slowly, with his eyes fixed upon hers triumphantly, with no imploring softness. He knew now that he loved her with his whole heart; also that he would go away and leave her, without further word, if she did not give herself to him unasked. Brutal! Yes, it was brutal; but then it was Cedric, and Cedric with his slackened loins regirded, and an exquisite desire to run his great Saxon head in the direction from which the winds of the world blew hardest, to shake the same in their faces, and bid them blow harder still.

For a moment she struggled

to say anything else; then her eyes fell, her arms dropped to her side, and her head bent. Cedric came forward, and, stooping low, caught the whisper—

"Back . . . to me . . . cruel!"

Then he took her in his arms and loved her—for ever.

"If I come back, it will be because of you. If I do not come back, it will be because of you. Everything is because of you . . ."

She sat on the stairs and listened to a hansom cab till she could no longer distinguish the sound of it. As the clattering hoofs merged into the roar of London, the steady, even, metallic clank of spurred heels on the pavement came up through the outer night and passed on in the same direction.

The girl shivered.

PART II.

Cedric stubbed his foot against a tussock of grass, whereupon the keen edge of the 40-lb. box of biscuits dug a little farther into the muscles where neck and shoulders meet. His right arm was stiff and aching horribly from holding the box in position. He put up his left arm to help the right, and perchance to move the box to a part of him that was not sore; but biscuit-boxes have been fashioned by a malignant war department, so that they have an "only way" of being carried, which is that the bulk of the dead-weight shall rest upon the most unfleshed portion of the

shoulder-bone; there shall be a heavy leaning against the head; finally, the eating edge shall grow into the neck muscles. He swore in tired deliberate tones as he recovered his balance. It was a dark, starless night. All that he could see in front of him was another biscuit-box sailing shadow-like through the hot, thunder-laden air: this, like a lost, itinerant phonograph, was giving out in half-heard fragments of rich Irish a fearful vilification of the Army Service Corps in general, with ridiculous libellings of the ancestors of a particular supply officer

who had drawn up his waggon a good three-quarters of a mile away from the men whose food he was carrying. Cedric felt grateful to this man, and appreciated the justice of his remarks. Nobody whose forbears had been of any account whatever would have subjected him to this fearful discomfort. He knew that behind him several more white, ghost-like biscuit-boxes were being projected through the night by weary, staggering, sleep-hungry men. Of course the supply officer must be an unfeeling beast, who was probably at that very moment stuffing himself with tinned bacon and perhaps green peas; he might even be drinking whisky and sparklet soda-water, for Cedric had seen them doing this very thing right under the men's noses. He fervently hoped, if it were so, that the officer hated sparklet soda-water as much as he himself did — at ordinary times. He longed to stop and rest, and he thought how comfortable it would be to sit upon this horrid thing that was eating into his shoulder; but that was impossible, for away ahead of the Irishman was an Australian, the only man of the party that they could trust to guide them straight back to their own lines. It was one of many sharp thrusts of unsuspected ignorance, this utter inability to find his way back to any place when he had once lost sight of it, not only in the night, but even in the daytime.

They had carried their burd-

ens about half a mile, and the twinkling fires of a large camp had gradually grown up round them. Looking neither to this side nor that, the long spare Australian plunged silently through the night. Only now and again they heard him "Ware hole here"; and the bobbing line of boxes made a small curve, and straightened out again upon its unerring line.

Behind him Cedric could hear disconnected grunts and murmurings. Suddenly the man immediately behind him shouted out, "Why *did* I leave my little back-room?" in a voice that made Cedric shiver, though the sweat was rolling down his face, gathering little muddy lumps of dust, and dropping them sometimes into his eyes. There was no attempt at singing; the man just said it with loud insistence and a diabolically cold questioning. It was the first line of the chorus of a music-hall song that Cedric could remember laughing at. Now it seemed that the words held the whole life-question of himself, and God alone knew how many more. The man had in fact gone weary mad, and Cedric felt through the back of his head that, so far as the other's load would permit of it, he was looking up at the sky for an answer. Yes, it was so; for the first was followed by a string of supplementary questions addressed to the Deity, and these in their turn were followed by demands for immediate and personal answer. He invited God to step down and tell him the "Why" of

many things connected with biscuits, other food, sleep, trekking, and numerous unwarlike details of war: he was dying to be struck dead, and he said so, and all the time he spoke with the cold, penetrating, sneering rage of his first ridiculous inquiry.

At last they were piling their boxes in a heap at the rear of a waggon, and a fresh, sharp voice was telling them they would not be required any more for the present. Blinded by the quartermaster-sergeant's lantern, and in truth a trifle light-headed, Cedric turned and staggered off into the darkness towards his lines. On the way he fell over an iron picket-peg, and came down heavily with his wrist on another one, the top of which was frayed and jagged with much hammering: he tore the skin, making an ugly jagged wound. He picked himself up slowly, and bound up the wound with the handkerchief he unfastened from his neck: it was soaked with sweat and the colour of London mud. He knew that the place would probably fester, for this was the condition of several small places on his hands, each of which gave him acute pain if barely touched. He found his horse, and saw that the beast must have shaken off his nose-bag when he had eaten no more than a few mouthfuls, for the feed was all scattered round and being trampled into the thick dust. He picked up the bag with its small remainder of the thrice precious grain, and made to put it back upon the horse. The brute threw up his

head, dragging a buckle of his headstall across two of the sores on Cedric's hands, and slashing him across the face with the grimy, sunbaked canvas bag. He seized the bag by its rope, dragged it away, and swung it into the air for a blow. "By" . . . "No" . . . He dropped his arm, and muttered to himself, "I mustn't go like the poor devil behind me in that biscuit procession just now; it would only be a further waste of tissue, and, by Jove! tissue's going up in the market, and must be hung on to. Never thought I should get in such a flurry about rotten little things. . . . Steady, now, Corsair . . . keep your ugly great head quiet just for a minute . . . there . . . you'll have your work out out to worry that off, and you'll get a little anyhow . . . you cave in to-morrow, and you'll know whose fault it is, if you've got any common horse sense."

A few feet to the rear of the horse Cedric's half blanket and overcoat were lying on the ground. As he moved towards them he felt two small stings, one on the nose, the other on the cheek. His foot touched the blanket, and he stooped down. The overcoat was giving out tiny staccato noises, the ground the same, but duller. There is always something left of surprise, something of the incredible, and not immediately grasped, about lumps of ice falling through a dark, breathless hot night.

"By Jove! it's hail," said Cedric, and in three seconds he was cowering on the ground with his overcoat over his head.

the same building was used with equal fitness as a modern ballroom is not so certain,—indeed it is open to question whether a ball was a necessary accompaniment to the distinctly oriental splendours and ceremonies of the Imperial durbar. But the point needs not to be insisted on. There is no doubt but that the State ball was regarded by many as the central feature of the Delhi gathering, and it was certainly admitted by all that nothing was wanting to make the festivity as brilliant and as successful as the heart of man—or woman—could desire. Those who know the exquisite white marble building of the Diwan-i-Khas and adjacent courts, with their inlaid pillars and gorgeously gilded ceilings, will readily believe to what a fairy palace they were transformed by the blaze of numberless electric lights and the glitter of diamonds. But their use as a supper-room by infidels was enough to rouse the fanatic Aurangzeb from his grave in the Deccan; and we ourselves confess to a feeling of relief when we found that the arrangements for the electric installation had necessitated the temporary covering up with a false cornice of that breathless inscription, “If there be a paradise upon earth, it is this, it is this, it is this!”

There was one characteristic of the big public ceremonials at Delhi which attracted very general comment, and which is deserving of some notice here: this was the apparent absence of any enthusiasm on the part

of the spectators. As the Viceroy's procession moved through the streets of Delhi at the State entry it was greeted with a subdued murmur of applause from the crowded thousands of natives, and with an occasional fitful cheer from the stands whereon the British spectators were seated, but anything approaching to the roar of cheering to which we are accustomed as a similar procession passes through London was conspicuously wanting. The same thing was noticeable at the great durbar. The arrival and the departure of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught were marked by some rounds of applause; that of the Viceroy received similar recognition, but in a less degree; and at the close of Lord Curzon's speech the vast multitude gave cheers for the King in answer to the Viceroy's call; but from first to last there was an entire absence of any appearance of enthusiasm. Once only did the spectators at Delhi break into spontaneous and hearty applause, and even then it was confined almost entirely to the British portion of the audience: we allude to the scene when the veteran survivors of the army which fought for the British Empire in the Mutiny campaign marched round the durbar arena and took their seats in the amphitheatre.

The explanation of this apparent indifference is easy, and is to be found in that dislike for noisy demonstration which is one of the few characteristics common to the native of India

and the Englishman. The feeling which prompts this dislike is widely different in the two peoples, although the results are superficially much the same. With the Indian a respectful silence, to be broken only by a subdued murmur of applause, is enjoined by his code of manners in the presence of superiors. He will shout loud enough in his amusements or in his quarrels; but to greet with noisy plaudits a procession of princes, governors, and high State officials would be an insulting and unseemly intrusion.

The silence of the British crowd at Delhi is to be accounted for by a renewed reference to the dislike for sentimental display to which we have already alluded in speaking of the influence of the assemblage on the officials of India. The British spectators at all the durbar celebrations belonged almost exclusively to the upper and middle classes, and any one who has been to a theatre where there is no pit or gallery will have had a striking instance of how undemonstrative those classes can be. They may admire the magnificence of a pageant, they may respect the talents and the high position of the Viceroy of India; but it takes more than this to break through their reserve and to draw forth their applause. Even the presence of the King's brother at Delhi failed to elicit any very noticeable demonstration. This peculiarity undoubtedly reduces the effectiveness of such pageants as

those of the durbar ceremonies: the comparative silence has a chilling effect, and gives no chance to enthusiasm; but it is, as we have said, a national characteristic alike of the British and of the Indian, and by no means indicates such want of loyalty as a similar attitude would betoken in a crowd composed of any of the Gallic races. An incident much more regrettable, and one which it must—we fear—be confessed was equally characteristic of the British of all classes, was the loud and derisive laughter which greeted the appearance at the durbar of one of the noblest of India's princes, and which was due solely to his being arrayed in the national State dress of his race. Such an exhibition of blatant vulgarity and rudeness made one blush for one's countrymen and for the criticism which must inevitably have filled the minds of the foreigners present. It need hardly be remarked that this was a performance in which the natives of India did not join.

None of what may be termed the side-shows of the Delhi durbar exceeded in interest the exhibition of Indian art which had been collected in a temporary building within the Kudsia garden; and Lord Curzon's speech at the opening ceremony is one which may be studied with profit by every one who has the welfare of India at heart, and by all who would learn how high and yet how practical are the aims of the present Viceroy in what-

ever direction he turns his attention. After describing how the idea occurred to him of using the great gathering at Delhi as an opportunity of resuscitating the declining art industries of India, Lord Curzon went on to state the lines on which he had intended the collection to be made: it was to be a collection of art work only; the art must be purely Indian; and it was to be the best procurable. "What I desired," he said, "was an exhibition of all that is rare, characteristic, and beautiful in Indian art. . . . But please remember it is not a bazaar, but an exhibition."

Unfortunately the intentions of the Viceroy were not entirely carried out in every particular. Whether from motives of economy, or to make the exhibition pay its way, the bazaar element was introduced; the exhibits were not in every case the best procurable specimens of all that is rare and beautiful in Indian art; the classification and the arrangement left much to be desired; and in many sections the numbers of articles piled one upon another on trestle-tables were far in excess of what was required for carrying out Lord Curzon's scheme of a carefully selected exhibition. Moreover, the workmen seemed in many cases to have been left too much to themselves, or to have been directed without artistic judgment. It must be remembered that the native of India is not an artist by temperament and by descent, as is the Japanese. However much the art of Japan

may be injured by an excessive demand for cheap goods, it is the execution which suffers almost solely: the craftsman may scamp his work, but he never loses his artistic taste; his methods are always right. It is not so in India. The native craftsman is a patient and plodding worker; but he is seldom an artist by nature. India has a great variety of beautiful applied arts, but they have for the most part been grafted on to the people by inheritance or by accident, and they are only seen at their best at periods when they have been subjected to the direction and control of a master-taste. Give an Indian or Burmese carver, silversmith, or embroiderer free play to produce what to his mind is the most worthy specimen of his craft, and his energies will be directed not to attaining purity of design nor perfection of workmanship, but to riotous elaboration of detail and excess of ornament, without any regard for appropriateness or propriety, which wearies the eye and surfeits by its very richness. There are many instances of this failing in the exhibition at Delhi, and one such may be specified, because it is most prominent and most glaring. In the centre of the main hall is a huge wooden archway sent from Burma, elaborately carved with a design so intricate as to leave no impression on the mind of the beholder as to its character: to such an extent is this misdirected elaboration carried, that the workmen have even

added within the arch festoons of foliage, and hanging fronds of leaves and tendrils. And yet could anything be more unsuited to the material to which the art is applied! The branches and festoons are so delicate that one is lost in amazement, as much at the excellent packing which must have been devoted to transporting such a work all the way from Burma as at the industry and technical skill which could produce such a *tour de force*. This may be the most *wonderful* specimen of Burmese wood-carving, but assuredly it is not such a use of applied art as should be exhibited with commendation.

We have, however, dealt with the worst side of the Delhi exhibition first. On the other hand, there is a surprising amount of really beautiful work, and a still more surprising variety in metal, stone, pottery, wood, horn, ivory, leather, lacquer, and textiles. Even people who know India well must be astonished at this variety and at the excellence and finish of the exhibits. How few, for instance, know anything of the beautiful lapidaries' work in jade and other stones which is contributed from the remote town of Bhera in the Punjab! How few Anglo-Indians have realised the possibilities of the ivory and mother-of-pearl veneer from Etawa in Rajputana, of the ivory inlaid on rosewood from Mysore, of the painting on leather from Shahpura, or of the inlaid *bidri* ware from

Bidar or Murshidabad! Even the better known arts of India are seen at the exhibition in a perfection rarely obtained from the curiosity merchants, and seldom to be found amongst the specimens in private houses in this country. Few people would have given the wood-carvers of the Punjab credit for such boldness of design, coupled with such excellence of finish; the engraved and lacquered brass from Moradabad is here seen in its purest styles; the brass from Jaipur, the brass inlay from Chiniot, the carved sandalwood from Mysore, the exquisite muslins from Dacca and Lucknow, and the embroideries from many parts of India, are here to be found of a quality which should educate the Anglo-Indian even more than the passing visitor as to the standard of excellence to be obtained from Indian workmen. But all of this is of secondary importance amongst the objects of the exhibition. Its primary aim is to serve as an object-lesson to the princes and nobles of India, to show them that for the beautification of their houses there is no necessity to go to the European shops at Calcutta or Bombay, "but that in almost every Indian state and province, in most Indian towns, and in many Indian villages there still survives the art, and there still exist the artificers, who can satisfy the artistic as well as the utilitarian tastes of their countrymen." Let us heartily re-echo the hope of Lord Curzon that the exhibition, which owes

its existence to him, may in some measure fulfil the purpose for which it was designed.

We have passed in review some aspects of the Durbar assemblage, the vast preparations which it involved, the brilliant ceremonies and functions which it included, and the results which it may be hoped will spring from it. We have attempted no detailed description. In the first place, the reading public at home will be surfeited with descriptive writing of our great Indian pageant long before these pages appear in print; and, moreover, what is the good of attempting to describe the indescribable? The inventions of modern science will supplement the word-painting of special correspondents with the diorama of the biograph; but no such photographic reproduction will succeed in conveying much idea of the brilliant scenes at Delhi. Whatever journalistic effort, however graphic, what photograph, however accurate, could adequately depict the pageant in the Chandni Chowk on the 29th December, when the Viceroy made his State entry into the imperial capital of India? The picturesque frontage of the houses, the balconies thronged with white-clad jewellers and merchants, and hung with gaudy cloths; the close-packed crowds of spectators in the sidewalks under the green shade of the trees; the magnificent procession of all the pomp and circumstance of war, followed by the long line of enormous elephants weighed down by

splendid howdahs of silver and gold, and almost hidden under priceless hangings; or again, as this same procession passed along the bare Khas Road under a blazing Indian sun up towards the great east gateway of the magnificent Jumma Masjid,—scenes such as these must have been beheld to be realised in all the wealth of sparkling brilliancy and all the richness of their colour. Nor can any cold description in words conjure up before the eyes of one who was not present the vast durbar amphitheatre, the white frontage and slender pillars of the roof, the extraordinary effect of the immense circle of spectators in the shadow of the building,—a white dress, or a scarlet tunic, or the flash of the jewelled necklace of some rajah catching the light here and there,—whilst outside in the brilliant sunlight of the arena was the mass of colour of the five or six hundred red-coated bandsmen, and the gorgeous gold-embroidered tabards, black chargers, and snow-white shabraques of the herald and trumpeters. Or again, to recall one more scene, how can the colourless pictures of the bioscope or the cinematograph give any but a faint and ghostly representation of that extraordinary procession, when for two hours and more the last survivors, the living relics, of ancient India streamed through the same arena, to the music of military bands, of braying trumpets, of screaming pipes, of rattling tom-toms, and of old traditional war-chants or

songs of victory? The gold-bedecked elephants, the camel batteries with their trappings of scarlet, the spearmen with their gaily painted shields, the silver and gold chariots of the princes, and the enormous houses on wheels drawn by teams of elephants,—these were sights to see and to wonder at, but hardly to be portrayed by laboured description or by the colourless accuracy of photography. If any one of the artists (and there were several) who were present at Delhi was fortunate enough to be seized with the divine afflatus, we may yet see a worthy pictorial presentment of some of the great scenes which during the first fortnight of this year were

added to the rich store of historic memories that hover round the city and palace of Shah Jahan. In any case, by those who were fortunate enough to be present, the Coronation durbar and its attendant ceremonials will be counted amongst the great experiences of a lifetime, furnishing not only an object-lesson in the proverbial magnificence and gorgeousness of the Eastern world, but also affording a never-to-be-forgotten illustration of the immensity and the variety of the Indian Empire, and a fitting testimony to the greatness of the British rule, which could give union and unity of sentiment to elements so varied and so dissimilar.

CEDRIC.

PART I.

HE led what some lady novelist has called a "man's life." In so much he was a man. To the ordinary eye there was nothing in him, and it is but fair to state that this view included his own self-estimate. He saw nothing in himself. This was perhaps because he had never taken the trouble to look at himself except in the glass, where he saw only beautiful waistcoats neatly framed in the best of other clothes. His politics consisted of counting himself one of many who held fief rights from the house of Cecil, and of having the same sort of admiration for Mr Chamberlain that some mining populations have for a bruiser who, with his hands tied behind his back, will fight any dog put opposite to him. He gave ten pounds a-year to charities, which was very good of him, seeing that his income was only about a thousand a-year, and his club subscription ten guineas. He was not one of those men who fume about, and lament their ignorance of, what to do with themselves. Distinctly otherwise. His time was fully occupied. He was always going somewhere, or doing something. There really hardly seemed to be any time that might be called "on his hands." He was seldom bored, mostly just placid, and in London had the slightest tinge of comfortable hurry. Men who

had been out in, and down into, the world, and knew things with their clothes off, and who generally hate his kind, had a strange unaccountable liking for him. Two or three of this sort were really quite fond of him. When the war in South Africa broke out he became quietly curious about the sort of thing war was, and concerning it tentatively questioned soldier friends who had seen active service. As may be expected, he got very little information upon which to build up any vivid impression. Some said it was overrated; others that it was jolly good fun—at times. A man who had lost an arm and considered himself adequately paid with a shilling's-worth of bronze, opined that it was better than steeplechasing at first, but that it palled after a while. On being pressed, this man acknowledged that steeplechasing, when kept up day and night for a year, might also pall. He didn't know, but it might.

He, our hero, weighed nigh upon fourteen stone; in training he had been only just twelve. Hanging round the walls of his dining-room were many oars and sculls, the emblems of prowess now ten years past. These were the most impressive witnesses of their owner's strength, for an oar shut up in a room, especially an oar whose blade is dec-

orated with golden names on a blue background, grows—as an impression of strenuousness—as an elephant does if shut up in a cage only just large enough to hold him. And yet it never occurred to the owner that these oars were constant large interrogations as to how he had followed up the glory with which they had been associated.

He moved about from the houses of his own relations to the houses of other people's relations, and was always welcome. This was because he never made any fuss as long as there was plenty to eat and drink, and because he would always talk to anybody that he was told to talk to, an accomplishment he had mastered by discovering the difficulty of ending a conversation if he confined himself to saying nothing but "Yes" here, "No" there, and "Do you really think so?" at odd times. He had picked up the last from a High Church parson, and it had renewed the faith in religion of his extreme youth.

He was a tall man, fair, and of course large: generally speaking, he looked and moved like Cedric the Saxon pushed up through the centuries into a frock-coat and top-hat. Polo at Hurlingham stood for the lists, where he lazily looked on at the achievements of others; for himself he nowadays seldom set lance at, or on, rest of a more dangerous description than a billiard-cue.

With the exception of a few vehement strugglers who occasionally grab the big things of

life, we are all more or less creatures of environment: witness the number of people who have become quite skilled engineers merely because they found themselves surrounded by money, time, and motor-cars. Cedric—let his name stand at that—was surrounded by a certain class of comfort, and took it, not ungratefully, for what it was worth. He was not without brains, it is evident, for it has been mentioned how he mastered the art of conversation. This particular accomplishment also showed that he possessed the quality of self-repression, a quality that in an apathetic nature is liable to run to light-hiding under the bushel of ease. He had tasted of one kind of success, and when he found that even a congratulatory poem in 'Punch' concerning one of his river victories did not stir him to anything more than a good-natured tolerance of the popular effusion, he concluded, as he allowed his quiet blue eyes to wander over and into other successful people, that he at any rate was not going to suffer from swollen head. He saw that the enlarged heads resultant of multitudinous back-patting lapsed speedily to their normal size when the patting passed on to other backs, and that the owners strove, each in his particular line, for further application of the dorsal massage that had such an intoxicating effect upon their heads. Eventually they were entitled successful men. Now, swollen head is a thing without which Britons would never have come

to be rulers of the waves, but would, even now, have been hewing down trees with stone axes, with an obvious lack of necessity for rolling up their shirt-sleeves so to do. Cedric won his last boat-race; his massive head did not enlarge in the smallest degree; no beneficent fairy god-mother removed his income; so for ten years he stood still.

War is the only specific liver tonic of nations. In the fullness of time England required medicine. In order that she should not die of too great prosperity, a negative disease that has killed nations before now, and with which she had come already to a sorry pass, the God of Nations ordered a prolonged course of Boer War, while the God of Battles stepped down into the arena to see that she did not have it all her own way.

Thereupon the men with whom Cedric mostly foregathered began to disappear from their accustomed haunts. Some spoke with pride of their regiments being among the first to be ordered to the front, and then threw in a grievance—here real, there false—concerning the loss of hunting, only to be told cheerily, from the depths of arm-chairs, that they would be back before it was over. Others, they were older, just evaporated. He missed them first, a few of them, when he saw their names in the paper as killed or wounded. He remembered that the last time he had seen them they had seemed a trifle more cordial than usual.

As he walked down Piccadilly, warmly clad and comfortable, on a certain Friday afternoon in December, he noticed for the first time, with a sharp feeling of something that he thought was only surprise, that the men he met were either much older or much younger than they used to be. The brown faces were entirely gone, or nearly so. He felt oppressed by his own largeness, health, able-bodiedness. Quite suddenly, as he was crossing Half-Moon Street, he knew how useless he was, and this feeling was immediately supplemented by one of meanness. He felt as though he had been to church and had deliberately shirked putting any money in the plate. He wished he had been in the army, or even in the militia, or even in the volunteers. Cedric contained his tiny integral apportionment of the national liver, and the great tonic was at work upon it.

The next morning he sat down as usual to a comfortable breakfast in the comfortable dining-room of his chambers, and opened the newspaper.

He read stolidly through the official account of the battle of Colenso.

At the last word he threw the paper from him and jumped up quickly. His chair fell down behind him, his coffee was spilt in front of him, and, even as these, there fell away the sides of the groove along which he had crawled since he had stepped out of the 'Varsity boat with the world before him.

The soul of Cedric was awakened.

This is not heroics, but just the plain truth.

He stood a moment staring in front of him, then his eye caught the broad mud-coloured line of coffee spreading in a silent stream across the snowy table-cloth.

"That's it! By God! that's it!" he almost shouted. "A libation to the God of Battles! . . . Good old cup, you shall work no more at sordid breakfasting!" He picked it up, and drove it with all the force of his great arm into the fireplace, where it splintered in a hundred pieces, and the clinging dregs spluttered out in the fire.

"I'll go out! . . . somewhere or somehow I'll get into it!" . . .

He dressed with his usual care, and went out into the street, never noticing how the gloom-stricken eyes on every side of him stole furtive, side-long glances, the people wondering what manner of man this was, carrying himself so squarely, with this look of newly awakened happiness in his face. For on that day old friends hardly dared to look at one another lest they should break down in unmanly weeping; the craven hearts blazed out their fear in gibbering execration of the baffled but unbeaten men who were even then gathering themselves to swoop, fighting, into the black unknown, with awful immediateness, or with slow, ghastly dismemberment. Even the stoutest was stricken with a

great sadness, and a wonderment that verged dangerously near to doubt.

Through all this gloom and sadness marched the great body of Cedric, while the soul in him wassinging a war-pæan, to which the crash of the old breakfast-cup upon the hearth had been the opening phrase. He was up and doing at last. The answer to the mute interrogation of the oars hanging on the wall was beginning to be spelt out.

It was the feeling of a deliciously cold shower-bath at the end of a long, lazy, tropical day. He would like to have been able to strike out from the shoulder as he walked along. He burst breezily in upon the old gentleman who conducted his legal affairs, and demanded that one or two alterations should forthwith be made in his will. The old gentleman had had a favourite nephew with the guns, and his eyes had a suspicion of Colenso red in them. Cedric took hold of himself and consoled, but escaped speedily into a hansom to his tailors, on to his bank, and lastly to the office of the Union-Castle line, where he booked a passage in the next boat for the Cape.

That night he dined at the house of some old friends. By his side sat a girl who for some time past had been willing, and a little more than willing, that Cedric should have the spending of her handsome income, if only he would say that he would care to have her with it. He liked her very much in his quiet undemonstrative way; but he had never thought of marriage,

nor had it occurred to him that she might have thought of it for him. By the light of the change that had swept over him, she seemed suddenly to be above all things desirable, so there came that into his voice and manner that made the heart of the heiress beat high with hope. He knew no more than the girl by his side of the details of war, but dimly and in the rough he understood the thing he had made up his mind to do. It was to leave the place and the surroundings where men were all about the same, and to go where they were either one thing or the other,—either brave men or cowards, greedy for their bodies and pockets, or lavish with the sacrifice of both; it was to find the man under the clothes. He had been possessed with the desire to discover himself—his power, or the lack of it.

Cedric stirred in his seat, for to his quickened perception had come the knowledge that he had won the love of the lady who was listening to him, and that he had but to ask in order to receive.

And now he was going away.

It was into a general pause that his voice fell: he looked up and around, half amused, half defiant, recognising that he had been heard by everybody.

"I have booked a passage to the Cape," he had said.

There was a second or two of astonished silence, then everybody spoke at once except the girl for whom the words had been meant, without whose presence he had never spoken them, and who, by a suddenly

apparent sense of duty, he had felt should be made aware of his intention as quickly as possible.

"I don't know," he said slowly, in answer to the average meaning of the table-full of inquiry that was hurled at him, "what I'm going to do. I should like to see something of what's going on. . . . No, I don't suppose I shall be of any use; it's rather late in the day for anything of that sort—for me." This was slightly bitter, and entirely unlike the Cedric of pre-Colenso times. He never remembered hating anything so much as that all this attention should have been drawn to his scheme. He had meant only that the girl should hear, and had felt sure she would understand; felt sure that there would have been no need to tell her that he did really mean to try to be of some use. He would even have told her something of the things that had been working in his mind all day, which he could not himself recognise distinctly, in that they were the foretaste of the weird, lustful joy that is brought to its consummation by the sights and sounds of battle.

"I shan't see you again before I go. . . . Good-bye."

"Good-bye, good luck, and come back safe to . . ."

"To what?" Something in the tone of her unfinished faltering transformed Cedric into the primeval wooer. All day long he had been the mere primeval man of war with nothing to make war upon, and here was the most beautiful of women

ready, at any rate metaphorically, to throw herself at his feet. . . . Very well, she should do so; then he would pick her up, take her to himself, and love her for ever.

She still hesitated.

"Why come back?" he said insistently, slowly, with his eyes fixed upon hers triumphantly, with no imploring softness. He knew now that he loved her with his whole heart; also that he would go away and leave her, without further word, if she did not give herself to him unasked. Brutal! Yes, it was brutal; but then it was Cedric, and Cedric with his slackened loins regirded, and an exquisite desire to run his great Saxon head in the direction from which the winds of the world blew hardest, to shake the same in their faces, and bid them blow harder still.

For a moment she struggled

to say anything else; then her eyes fell, her arms dropped to her side, and her head bent. Cedric came forward, and, stooping low, caught the whisper—

"Back . . . to me . . . cruel!"

Then he took her in his arms and loved her—for ever.

"If I come back, it will be because of you. If I do not come back, it will be because of you. Everything is because of you . . ."

She sat on the stairs and listened to a hansom cab till she could no longer distinguish the sound of it. As the clattering hoofs merged into the roar of London, the steady, even, metallic clank of spurred heels on the pavement came up through the outer night and passed on in the same direction.

The girl shivered.

PART II.

Cedric stubbed his foot against a tussock of grass, whereupon the keen edge of the 40-lb. box of biscuits dug a little farther into the muscles where neck and shoulders meet. His right arm was stiff and aching horribly from holding the box in position. He put up his left arm to help the right, and perchance to move the box to a part of him that was not sore; but biscuit-boxes have been fashioned by a malignant war department, so that they have an "only way" of being carried, which is that the bulk of the dead-weight shall rest upon the most unfleshed portion of the

shoulder-bone; there shall be a heavy leaning against the head; finally, the eating edge shall grow into the neck muscles. He swore in tired deliberate tones as he recovered his balance. It was a dark, starless night. All that he could see in front of him was another biscuit-box sailing shadow-like through the hot, thunder-laden air: this, like a lost, itinerant phonograph, was giving out in half-heard fragments of rich Irish a fearful vilification of the Army Service Corps in general, with ridiculous libellings of the ancestors of a particular supply officer

who had drawn up his waggon a good three-quarters of a mile away from the men whose food he was carrying. Cedric felt grateful to this man, and appreciated the justice of his remarks. Nobody whose forebears had been of any account whatever would have subjected him to this fearful discomfort. He knew that behind him several more white, ghost-like biscuit-boxes were being projected through the night by weary, staggering, sleep-hungry men. Of course the supply officer must be an unfeeling beast, who was probably at that very moment stuffing himself with tinned bacon and perhaps green peas; he might even be drinking whisky and sparklet soda-water, for Cedric had seen them doing this very thing right under the men's noses. He fervently hoped, if it were so, that the officer hated sparklet soda-water as much as he himself did — at ordinary times. He longed to stop and rest, and he thought how comfortable it would be to sit upon this horrid thing that was eating into his shoulder; but that was impossible, for away ahead of the Irishman was an Australian, the only man of the party that they could trust to guide them straight back to their own lines. It was one of many sharp thrusts of unsuspected ignorance, this utter inability to find his way back to any place when he had once lost sight of it, not only in the night, but even in the daytime.

They had carried their burd-

ens about half a mile, and the twinkling fires of a large camp had gradually grown up round them. Looking neither to this side nor that, the long spare Australian plunged silently through the night. Only now and again they heard him "Ware hole here"; and the bobbing line of boxes made a small curve, and straightened out again upon its unerring line.

Behind him Cedric could hear disconnected grunts and murmurings. Suddenly the man immediately behind him shouted out, "Why *did* I leave my little back-room?" in a voice that made Cedric shiver, though the sweat was rolling down his face, gathering little muddy lumps of dust, and dropping them sometimes into his eyes. There was no attempt at singing; the man just said it with loud insistence and a diabolically cold questioning. It was the first line of the chorus of a music-hall song that Cedric could remember laughing at. Now it seemed that the words held the whole life-question of himself, and God alone knew how many more. The man had in fact gone weary mad, and Cedric felt through the back of his head that, so far as the other's load would permit of it, he was looking up at the sky for an answer. Yes, it was so; for the first was followed by a string of supplementary questions addressed to the Deity, and these in their turn were followed by demands for immediate and personal answer. He invited God to step down and tell him the "Why" of

many things connected with biscuits, other food, sleep, trekking, and numerous unwarlike details of war: he was dying to be struck dead, and he said so, and all the time he spoke with the cold, penetrating, sneering rage of his first ridiculous inquiry.

At last they were piling their boxes in a heap at the rear of a waggon, and a fresh, sharp voice was telling them they would not be required any more for the present. Blinded by the quartermaster-sergeant's lantern, and in truth a trifle light-headed, Cedric turned and staggered off into the darkness towards his lines. On the way he fell over an iron picket-peg, and came down heavily with his wrist on another one, the top of which was frayed and jagged with much hammering: he tore the skin, making an ugly jagged wound. He picked himself up slowly, and bound up the wound with the handkerchief he unfastened from his neck: it was soaked with sweat and the colour of London mud. He knew that the place would probably fester, for this was the condition of several small places on his hands, each of which gave him acute pain if barely touched. He found his horse, and saw that the beast must have shaken off his nose-bag when he had eaten no more than a few mouthfuls, for the feed was all scattered round and being trampled into the thick dust. He picked up the bag with its small remainder of the thrice precious grain, and made to put it back upon the horse. The brute threw up his

head, dragging a buckle of his headstall across two of the sores on Cedric's hands, and slashing him across the face with the grimy, sunbaked canvas bag. He seized the bag by its rope, dragged it away, and swung it into the air for a blow. "By" . . . "No" . . . He dropped his arm, and muttered to himself, "I mustn't go like the poor devil behind me in that biscuit procession just now; it would only be a further waste of tissue, and, by Jove! tissue's going up in the market, and must be hung on to. Never thought I should get in such a flurry about rotten little things. . . . Steady, now, Corsair . . . keep your ugly great head quiet just for a minute . . . there . . . you'll have your work out out to worry that off, and you'll get a little anyhow . . . you cave in to-morrow, and you'll know whose fault it is, if you've got any common horse sense."

A few feet to the rear of the horse Cedric's half blanket and overcoat were lying on the ground. As he moved towards them he felt two small stings, one on the nose, the other on the cheek. His foot touched the blanket, and he stooped down. The overcoat was giving out tiny staccato noises, the ground the same, but duller. There is always something left of surprise, something of the incredible, and not immediately grasped, about lumps of ice falling through a dark, breathless hot night.

"By Jove! it's hail," said Cedric, and in three seconds he was cowering on the ground with his overcoat over his head.

The hail stopped as though it had been shaken out of a bag, and the bag was empty. When he found he was no longer being battered by the vicious ice-bullets he stood up. Then came a flash of lightning, a crash of thunder, and, as if these had shot back some gigantic sliding roof that supported some gigantic cistern, came the rain. Cedric stood awed and dazed in the middle of one of the most nerve-shaking things that man is heir to, a South-African thunderstorm on the open veldt in the middle of the night. In a few minutes he was standing in water up to his ankles and repeating to himself the words his chum, the Australian, had said as they had drawn into the camp, "Pray the Lord it doesn't rain till we move on." Undoubtedly, thought Cedric, the Lord had heard, and thought the occasion a good one to find out exactly what these men were made of, who had been practically sleepless, travelling through intolerable dust and heat on less than half rations for four weary days.

A voice came through the sheets of rain, heard as sounds from the top come to one under water, saying, "Stand to your horses."

"Damned fool!" said another voice close to Cedric's ear. He had not known any one was near him. It was the Australian.

"Damned fool! all the horses are gone long ago."

His friend's voice came as a rescue ship to a man on a desert island. The other voice

came again; its water-muffled shout had a note of indignant beseeching—

"Stand to your horses!"

"Let him yell; he can't find us any more than we can find the horses till this stops."

"Did you know you were near me?" shouted Cedric, after a peal of thunder through which he could feel his very soul trembling.

"Yes . . . I knew . . . wet, isn't it? . . . this little bit of Africa's going to be half-way up to our knees directly. . . . A schoolgirl who'd been a healthy amount of her time out of doors wouldn't have dumped a camp down in a dry swamp like this was, . . . and an iron bedstead would have known it was going to rain like hell before long." The Australian was not angry, only filled with a pitying contempt for the authorities, and their ignorance of things that to him were the A B C of life itself. It seemed to Cedric now that it was ages ago since he had been warm, that the nearest thing to warmth anywhere about was the Australian's voice, and his palpable, though not in the least aggressive, presence of mind. What a fool he had been to curse the heat! The sores on his hands and his newly torn wrist ached sickeningly. This rain was icy cold. He began to shiver.

"What are we going to do?" he chattered.

"Stand here and get clean: it won't last long."

A flash of lightning showed them a man plunging towards them. It was a lieutenant—a

stupid enthusiast who went about always with the impression that he had just risen, or was just going to rise, to an emergency. When there was an emergency he rose so quickly as invariably to fall over the top of it into a chasm of fluster. As he floundered through the water he was still adjuring men whom he could not see, and did not know the whereabouts of, to stand to their horses, the bulk of the same being subsequently discovered huddled together a mile from the camp—a mile of impenetrable darkness and blinding waterspout. The Australian put his hand on Cedric's shoulder, and Cedric understood . . . silence. The lieutenant went by almost touching them, still with his useless, querulous, exasperating cry. The Australian leant forward and whispered—

"We'll find him in the morning after we've found the horses, the silly ass!" Cedric began to laugh, and the other had to take him by both shoulders, shake him, say, "Pull yourself together," and "There, there, you're right now," before the laughter would stop, for first of all it mixed itself up with teeth chattering, then suddenly swerved into deep chest-sobs with little laughs between them. At last he managed to blurt out, "Thank you . . . better now. . . . I gather that this cold-water diet is not meant for laughing on."

Suddenly as it had begun the deluge ceased. One by one stars began to show. In five minutes the blue-black sky

was ablaze with tiny lights, and it was possible to see dimly what had happened. There were no horses left in that part of the camp. Men were standing about, singly or in groups, in some eight inches of muddy water.

"The little things a fellow cares about," said the Australian, "will take some finding."

"By God! I never thought they'd actually change ground," said Cedric, who had started confidently to fish for his haversack, which, with all its utterly important trifles, was gone. He found his rifle and bandolier, then with careful, stretched hands continued to search, one moment with contemptuous confidence, the next with the premonition of a great loss. The Australian was sent off by a non-commissioned officer who knew his worth, and hated him for it, to try and find out which way the horses had gone. The same man came presently to Cedric. "Can't you see, man, everybody's moving off to the right, on to the high ground; pick up your things and come on."

"I want to find my haversack; you surely don't wish . . ."

"I don't want any of your backtalk; do as I tell you and do it quick; there's plenty more haversacks in the British army, and if your woman's picture's gone too, why there's plenty . . ."

Cedric stood up and faced the sergeant; in his blue eyes showed the steady glint of Saxon killing.

"I'll tell you what it is," he

began, "I'll just . . ."—he paused; for the second time that night he had almost forgotten himself,—“just follow you anywhere you like to go, sergeant!”

But the sergeant had been much impressed with the look in Cedric's eyes, and he said, “Go first, I'll follow you, and see if there are any more stragglers.”

It was one of those pieces of petty military tyranny that arise not so much from the tyrannical nature of the superior as from his misunderstanding of his fellows, and a fear of losing ground that he will not have the personality to regain subsequently.

Cedric trudged off in the wake of another man who had loomed up from behind, and passed on during his futile attempt to transform the machine-made sergeant into a sympathising fellow-creature. The man in front had his haversack over his shoulder, and it seemed to Cedric that he was displaying it blatantly, though there was nothing of triumph in his forward stoop and his weary little stamps on the dirty water, each followed by a half-smothered squelch as the other foot came up out of the clinging black soil.

“Got all your things?” Cedric asked.

“Yes,” said the other. “Why didn't you smash that swine of a sergeant? You could do it easily, and he's looking for it badly . . . he'd no witnesses; I wouldn't have seen anything.”

“I very nearly did, . . . glad I didn't though . . . he'll keep.”

They came upon the other men. Mostly they were standing in almost silent groups as they had been before the move: the change from cold water to wet ground was nothing to exult about. Some had thrown themselves down and promptly gone to sleep, for the rheumatism of the future does not appeal to men whom the earth woos as a recumbent lover beckons to her mate; not to speak of the large chance that the future would be passed in a place that is quiet, close, and where rheumatism and all other aches are unknown. Only men who have been in a like case can know in its entirety the hunger for the comradeship of daylight. At last the false dawn showed in the east, and died, even as the first tinge of hope always goes out for a while in a revulsion of the despair that it has come to rescue from. There followed the true dawn, at first just a streak, that spread, and spread, as upward so outward, till presently it took the blue colouring that means light, not only in the east but everywhere; the blue changed slowly to molten gold, with tumbled masses of dead purple fringed with dead scarlet floating in the front of it, the glowering remnants of the stormy night. In the midst came suddenly a tiny arc of more golden gold, and in five minutes the sun was up, clear above the horizon, and had scattered the frowning tempest wrack into thin white streamers that presently died out into nothing, leaving only the blue sky, the green earth, and the burnished golden sun, that go to

make the gorgeous summer day of the high veldt of South Africa. For man to kill man on such a day would seem the desecration of a cathedral by its own priests.

Through the dim first light following on the heels of the dawn had come the horses, entirely ashamed, walking quietly in amongst the men, looking from side to side apologetically, and entirely submissive to the lean, silent figure that rode behind them, both his legs dangling, one lower than the other, on the near side of a horse that he rode barebacked, and guided with the halter-rope passed through its mouth. When he was close to Cedric the Australian slid from the horse's back, and, leaving the halter-rope hanging loose, walked towards him. The non-com. who had sent the Australian on the errand so skilfully and faithfully carried out, roared at him—

"What the devil d'yer mean, letting that horse go? don't yer see there are none caught yet? d'yer want to go after them again?"

The Australian turned quickly in his tracks and came to the sergeant, whom he stood over and looked down upon. He spoke softly, half to himself, as though continuing the thread of some inquiry of his thoughts.

"Sergeant, do you think there is any great likelihood, just at present"—he looked up at the clear sky from which the stars seemed to be falling upwards dozens at a time—"of your being swept up to heaven"—he threw up his arm, and the

sergeant stepped back—"in a cloud? I can see you don't. Well, those horses are just as likely to scare again, for a bit: they're a heap sorrier about that little jaunt of theirs than you were—why, look at 'em!" Then he spoke a few words rapidly in a low voice to the non-com., who answered sulkily, "All right; you'd better get about it at once."

The Australian put one of two miraculously dry cigarettes in his mouth, and made towards the haversackless Cedric, smiling his seldom, fatherly smile, and with the other smoke extended between finger and thumb.

"Do you good."

Something glistened in the outside corner of Cedric's right eye that might have been either distilled gratitude or a cold. A wax match came from a securely corked little glass bottle. . . .

"Goes down into your legs, and takes the ache out of 'em, don't it?" said the tall man, as he watched the look of comfort spread over Cedric's face. "There's a heap of unnecessary cigarettes smoked ordinary times," he went on; "these two take rank in a higher, more useful class,—what do you think?"

"I think," said Cedric, dropping into the other's sententious frivolity, "that the ashes of these cigarettes will stand in a little urn on the table of my memory for . . ."

"Becos there is no h-other
Can taikie the place 'er mother."

The interruption came from

under the arm of the Australian. A bullet head was turned face upwards singing at him, and an arm was round his waist.

"Charles Baker of London, come out o' that," and the little Cockney in question found himself seated on the ground between the man from the back-blocks of New South Wales and the man from Piccadilly. The Australian deftly twisted his cigarette into two pieces, lit the end he had had in his mouth from the other, and handed the remainder to Baker.

"You're a fair knockout—that's wot yer are, as I sez jes now in the song 'there h'aint no h'other.' Can you find them 'orses, sez 'e; not 'arf, sez you, or words to that effect—H'out yer goes into the bleedin' night that's a trifle darker than a coal-cellar with a fog in it . . . h'out yer goes, and I fer one thinks, there's an end of the blooming Cornstalk . . . time goes on, as they say in the penny books, time goes on," he repeated with relish—"but he doesn't go on long before h'up yer comes with the 'orses out o' blanky nowhere . . . and it ain't no trouble to yer . . . well, wot I sez is there h'aint no h'other. . . . Now the h'earl 'ere and me, we'd er been lost, ekally lost . . . there ain't no class predijis about this 'ere veldt . . . when it comes to a matter of gropin' around in the dark on the swellin' boosum of the plains; what o'—lan-widge! there a won'erful equorlity about us Britishers, ain't there, milord?"

"There is," said Cedric; "without doubt there is."

"You've saved me the trouble of going to look for you, Charlie," said the Australian. "I want to know whether you two fellows will come for a ride with me this morning?"

The little man was on his feet in a second, one leg stiff, the other bent at the knee, with the toe of the boot just touching the ground, the cigarette stump between first and second fingers, a few inches from the mouth, his head in the air, sideways. Having carefully made these dispositions, he spoke.

"Bai Jove! old chap. . . . But I say, wot time will your fella' bring the 'orses raound to the front door, dontcher-know?"

"When I was coming in with the horses a while ago," said the Australian, "just down there I passed the little colonel walking up and down with his helmet under his arm—you know the way he has. He seemed to think I was a kind of Japanese juggler, because I'd followed the tracks of fifty horses or so, in mud . . . asked me if I thought I could find the column on the move, I being a few miles away. I said that if he would give me an idea which way he was going, and when he started, there wasn't much difficulty in that. Then he told me that if I liked the job I could take a couple of men, pick my horses, and get out and try to find this laager they're after. He thought the column would start in about two hours. Will you chaps come?"

"Me!" said Cedric. "I'm no good, but" . . . the futility of his labours since joining this regiment of Irregular Horse struck him all of a heap. At a certain crossing in Piccadilly the uselessness of his other life had struck him in the same way. The subsequent exaltation of war as the unknown blood-stirring usefulness was all the joy that had come with the change. The reality of war had, so far, been a ceaseless drudgery—a dead-level of brute labour punctuated by such experiences as that of the previous night; and here was a man asking him, actually inviting him, to come up out of the ruck, take on some measure of responsibility, do something that might count . . . "but . . .

of course I'll come . . . d—d glad to . . . thanks . . . awfully good of you."

As to Charles Baker of London, when he had gathered the gist of the Australian's invitation to ride with him, he had begun immediately to circle round the other two in a series of laboured leg contortions and elbow-flapping, distantly resembling what is known as a cake-walk, assuring them the while, in a low incantation, of the absolute inability of any one to capture that foremost place held by mothers in the affections of their sons. There came an order: the column would move in an hour and a half.

"We must get," said the Australian.

PART III.

Half-way up a long slope Cedric and Charles Baker were standing by the three horses. The Australian was crawling on his hands and knees among the boulders, near the summit of the ridge. From the information he had started with of direction and distance, he gathered that he must be somewhere near the laager, and his soul was the soul of the tracker at work—his whole aim to find without being found, or, at any rate, to find first. At the bottom of the ridge they had crossed a small "donga." On the bank coming out of it was the fresh spoor of several horses, fresh since the rain—tracks that he knew at sight were not two hours old. He recognised that in not follow-

ing these tracks he was taking chances; but the ridge looked as if he must see a big stretch of country from the top of it. It was too tempting.

He had taken off his hat and stuffed it in between the second and third buttons of his tunic. As he writhed slowly upwards, the hope growing bigger and bigger in him that he would presently see what he had come forth to see, and, two minutes later, be galloping for the column, he now and again looked anxiously backward at the two men and the three horses, standing unconcernedly between him and the fresh spoor. He had left them in a state of intense alertness and keenness as to possible happenings. Cedric was revelling in

the long untasted nobility of being useful—he was helping at last in a business that might be of real good. He did not think of the oars in his dining-room. Had he done so he was in the mood to have nodded cheerfully to them across the great distance—the nod of a broken comradeship re-established. But the sun, master of the moods of earth, was steeping everything in a soft, comforting warmth. The horses' heads drooped lower and lower towards the ground. To Baker the warmth brought a sense of absolute safety that was a mixture of the comfort thereof and his childlike faith in the man in charge.

"It's a bit o' orl right out 'ere with no blooming non-coms.;" and through one of his backward glances the Australian saw him slowly sit down, take leisurely grasp of his knees, and let his chin sink towards them.

"Taik a chair, milord, 'e'se a-watchin' over us," he said with a sleepy upward movement of the head, which might have been meant either for God or the Australian.

Cedric looked drowsily round him. He had been in the saddle about ten hours of the day before, and had spent the night in a mixture of hard labour, and standing about soaked to the skin, cold to his innermost soul. He sat down too, and thought dimly that everything looked very beautiful in the soft warm sunlight. How utterly comfortable it was just to sit upon the stony ground. The horses' heads drooped lower still. The opposite slope that

they had ridden down—how long ago was it?—reminded him of the hill rising up behind the island at Henley. With sleepy searching he looked round for the river, and chuckled stupidly as he remembered where he was. . . . Then, slowly he slid back again, . . . to Henley.

One of the beasts he was holding brought the rude awakening—that most piteous of all noises—a horse's scream. The poor brute dragged back so suddenly that Cedric let go the rein before he was quite awake, and the horse lurched away through the laughing sunlight with choking moans. The other fell dead at his feet, while into the beautiful morning came the cold, metallic, voiceless sounds of the rip-rap of Mausers, and the steady crash of Martinis.

The dead horse, lying with his feet to the dozen or thereabouts of Boers, flashed upon Cedric as many things. It was a fort, a haven of safety, a position to be held at all or any cost; and it was a comrade to be avenged. Baker was unaware, for the moment, of the existence of anything but an atmosphere charged with the cruel, spiteful, tuneless whang of bullets, and of the horse in front of him, dragging him—dragging him—where? Through an eyeball-starting panic he was still doing what he conceived to be his duty, hanging desperately to the horse. . . . Past the Leander lawn, and nobody expected they could come again. The lead was too big, the distance too short. But they had come,

with a spurt that sent the colour-spangled river roaring its delight—the warning snorts of the horses—in the finest struggle seen for years. Cedric, with his crew behind him, forged, inch by inch, to a dead level. Then by a mighty lifting, last few strokes shot ahead, and won by a boat's nose. . . .

From this victory the piercing scream of the horse brought him in an instant to the middle of an unequal fight for life. Why! an unequal fight for life was the one thing his soul so thirstily desired. The wild joy of imminent defeat defeated filled him. He had fallen asleep when it was the last thing he should have done. Well, he would make up for it. No wonder that Baker scarcely recognised the ringing confidence of the voice.

"Let him go! Let him go! Come back to your gun, Charley boy!" It was a mixture of command and joy; a bugle with an exultant human soul in it.

Baker dropped the rein. Even as he did so the poor brute he had held sank upon his hindquarters, while out of his eyes stared the beseeching, uncomprehending helplessness of the wounded horse.

"Curse 'em! Curse 'em! Curse 'em!" It was his elegy to the stricken brute comrade. Then he turned and bolted through the searching bullets, striking at the sounds of them with his fists as he ran. Close to the dead horse he stumbled, his left leg refused duty, and he fell heavily with his head against Cedric's arm.

"Good man," said Cedric, with the heartfelt appreciation he would have given to a hit out of the ground at Lord's, as he saw the little Cockney writhe round, grasp his rifle, and, with unceasing lurid blasphemy pouring through bloody bitten lips, lay it across the horse's back and fire.

Cedric, at the first, had thrown himself down behind the horse, and begun quietly to pick off the enemy, who had come boldly out into the open, never dreaming of resistance from two men. They would kill the horses, then it would be a certainty. Two of them had fallen to Cedric's rifle, dead or wounded he could not tell. Then came a joy-bell, the report of the Australian's Lee-Metford from the top of the ridge, and another Boer made as though he kicked at a football, missed it, and overbalanced himself. He did not get up. The enemy ran back helter-skelter to the cover of the donga. Cedric had been obliged to chance the top of his head, and a red-hot iron seemed to have been laid across it and left there. He had constantly to brush the blood out of his eyes.

A steady fire came from the donga. Plunk! plunk! plunk! —the noise of the bullets striking the carcass fort. They were trying to kill them *through* the horse. Cedric screwed himself into a ball, managed to strip off one puttie, and bandaged Baker's leg as well as he knew how. He had just done this when the little

man slipped limply from the horse's back where he had been recklessly exposing his head and answering the fire from the donga.

"Copped it in the guts somewhere," he said faintly, and drew up his knees with a horrible unnatural quickness, . . . "and again, by God!"

He made two pitifully ineffectual attempts to retake hold of his rifle; but the fingers stood out stiff, and then slowly closed, holding nothing. He raised his head, but it fell heavily on a sharp stone, and blood came from the wound. Blood was coming from his mouth. Cedric, with a grim, impotent desire to slaughter, lay by him, and knew he was dying.

"What can I do for you?"

"Kill the swine that giv' me this lot," came the answer between choking spirits of blood.

The Australian was firing steadily from the ridge.

For the time being the Boers would not face it. Cedric, lying flat on his stomach beside the dying Londoner, listened lest he might speak again. He opened his eyes and made a horrible contortion of his face. Cedric knew it for a smile, took his hand, and felt the slightest pressure in return to his. Then he looked up quickly over the horse to see if the rush was coming—not yet.

The Australian let off three shots quickly.

The little Cockney's lips moved. Cedric wriggled nearer to him. There was a soft,

babyish murmuring, at first unintelligible; later it came quite plainly: "Then there ain't . . . no other . . . can" . . . The body twisted a few times, kicked out to all its sturdy little length, and lay still.

Before all this the Australian had reached the top of the ridge and looked cautiously over. About two miles away under a kopje there was slow, large movement, that looked like some mighty python uncoiling, and pushing itself slowly out on to the plain. It was the Boer laager breaking up. He had done what he had come out to do—all but the gallop back with his news. His limbs slackened from the tension they had been strung to, and he heaved a long satisfied sigh. The "Ah!" came from his lips out loud, and the sound of it had not died on the air when all that it meant was out into, stifled, strangled, and flung back in his face by the firing. It was a cruel, back-handed, dirty blow, he thought, of Fortune. All his life the work in hand had been his master more than his companion; a sort of driven doggedness was the bulk of his character. So there came at first, as the predominant idea, to get back to the column with his news. It was his duty, if he could get away, to do so. The loss of two men, who would probably be taken prisoners,—probably be taken prisoners, his brain repeated and repeated,—was nothing to the potential value of his information. He could slip down the farther

side of the ridge, work round, perhaps get one of the Boer horses, and be off. It would be a triumph in its way, and it was his work, his duty. Then came Cedric's joyous shout of command to Baker; before its mad contagion of fight and confidence, duty, as it had appeared, fled, damned and driven out. This was no man to leave to his fate, this slow self-repressed Englishman, who could slough his slowness and self-repression as a wrestler throws off his overcoat to step into the ring. He knew now that he had known all along what was in the man. There was a bare chance still; they'd fight it for what it was worth.

The Australian lay down behind a boulder, and took on his new line of work, dropped the Boer that fell after Cedric's two first shots, then settled down to watch his opportunity of joining the other two. . . .

Baker was dead.

Suddenly a terrible misgiving obsessed the Australian. He saw that Cedric fumbled at his dead comrade's sleeve and pulled out a handkerchief. Surely the man couldn't be going to . . . He leapt to his feet and flung himself down the slope, waving his rifle.

"Christ! man! don't chuck it, . . . don't chuck it *now* . . . don't give in!"

As he started downwards eight Boers sprang out of the donga and rushed the little position, shouting, "Hands up! Hands up, ye —! Surrender!" They fired wildly as they came. Cedric finished wiping the bloody foam from

Baker's lips, heard the Australian screaming at him, turned to his front, saw the rush, and standing up to his full height, fired. There was one less of the enemy. The Australian reached him and pulled his trigger, but the bullet went into the dead horse, for his left arm had fallen to his side. Cedric began to sink slowly to the ground, and then toppled. He would have lurched against the other, but threw himself clear, and fell beside Charley Baker. The Australian never looked at him, but as he drew his revolver took a step to the right and stood across his middle.

"*Now!*" he said, as he faced the seven charging men: ool, wary, actionful, even as he had often faced charging cattle in his own yards, thousands of miles away. Before it was all over he felt another sting in the left shoulder. . . .

There were four of the enemy left standing.

"Throw down your arms!"

The Australian flung the words at the huddled men. There was a moment's silence without motion, then a rifle moved slightly upward.

"Ah-h-h!" It was a crescendo growl of warning from behind the revolver. Again the four men were motionless. The revolver began slowly to move this way and that, never covering the same man, always covering one.

It was *the* moment of five lives. Each man knew that in the next tick of time he might be lying dead. If the four

pulled together assuredly only one of them could go under. . . .
"Good! . . . I never meant . . ."

. . . Would they?

The Australian, bareheaded, with legs apart, and head slightly bent towards his right arm, which was almost extended, but a little crooked at the elbow, seemed to be turned into a weird human weather-cock, the shining barrel indicating the gentlest breeze, a very certainty of waywardness. Out of his face shone the cold relentlessness of a piece of machinery working out its driven destiny; no hope, no fear, nothing but purpose. He had met all the eyes, and knew that one pair should, if possible, be more watched than the others. It was not possible. The revolver was at its farthest point from these dangerous eyes when the brave Boer took his chance. The rifle literally flew to his shoulder. There was only one place to hit him to be in time. The body came to the ground as though it had fallen from a great height, with the sickening suddenness of the brain-death, and the revolver slowly swung back across what was left of them. The fight was won. The three rifles clattering to the stony ground acclaimed it so.

The Australian felt Cedric pat him feebly on the leg, and heard him say in a queer, far-off voice—

"No; I know you didn't, old chap: forgive me!"—still he never looked down. "Wait a minute till I get these gentry away from their guns; I must finish the job now: you did all the useful business."

"Useful?" came a soft, satisfied interrogation in the same far-away voice.

"Yes; by God! useful!" He felt that Cedric moved somehow. The revolver was still pointing at the three men, as the Australian quietly asked them to change ground a little to the right. He watched them steadily as they walked. One of them came forward a little and spoke in good English—

"Do not be afraid that we will do anything more; we surrender to a brave man." At last, with a cheery, "Now, old chap," he knelt down to look to his friend.

Cedric was lying on his side, with his head on the little Cockney's chest, smiling, with open eyes . . . dead. The red written evidence was all around him that he had quietly bled to death without mentioning it—not to interfere with the fight.

In the blazing sunlight the Australian felt cold, and in the hour of his triumph, humble, and of small account.

The mute interrogation of the oars was answered.

LETTERS TO A LITERARY ASPIRANT.

(Being an Anatomy of Art contained in a few letters addressed to
Mr —, and now published by permission of the writer.)

IV.

MY DEAR NEPHEW,—Can you be funny, if you try very hard? I do not mean “are you naturally humorous?” for that would open no new door in fiction, and this time I am going to suggest a raid on originality. The whole of existence can be treated humorously, as Mr Fielding, for instance, treated it; though, on the other hand, a saving sense of humour will enjoin you to except many matters from its dominion, and to obtain much of your effect by contrast with more serious scenes. As, for example, when poor Peter Peebles stumbles in upon Justice Foxley’s inquiry, or Major Pendennis comments on the misfortunes of his friends. This method will create no “boom.” “It has been done before, and reminds us of some one else,” the critics will say; “what we want is originality.” So to avoid this fate you must seek another road to notoriety.

Such a facetious highway was discovered some years ago, in America, I believe; and this route has since been followed nearer home, with modifications that have satisfied the most exacting critics of its freshness, and a success that must have convinced the authors of their mission. The basis of the method is this. You adopt the rôle of a semi-educated buffoon,

and in this capacity narrate your escapades as the persevering and long-suffering clown who enlivens the domestic hearth and exhilarates the sea- (or river-) side resorts to which he repairs on bank holidays. Nothing but funniments happen (to use a term appropriate to your supposititious character); your acquaintance includes no gentlefolk and no one of normal intelligence, and in this society you and your “pals” butt your heads together, abstract each others’ flasks, deceive your wives, and forget your latch-keys.

The Humorist who capers thus disguised then labels his work with some such alluring legend as ‘Five Men in a Pub,’ or ‘Mary Anne,’ or any other title that will cause an expectant giggle as soon as it is advertised.

Now, I would not have you copy too slavishly the works of these masters, or you will have their admirers crying “Imitator!” round your heels. Purloin a technique if you will, but be careful to obliterate the owner’s monogram. Nothing looks worse than a conviction for larceny. Nothing is easier to avoid with a little ingenuity. For instance, why not apply the method I have described to a different stratum of society?

Suppose we bid for the Humorist's laurels in the guise of a funny marquis, and see who will dare to deny us our meed.

"It won't do," I remarked.

"What won't?" asked the Viscount.

He always was obtuse, was the Viscount. It is hereditary I expect. His uncle lost an archbishopric through the same defect.

"Would you like your apron?" Lord Salisbury asked him one day when they were on especially friendly terms.

"No, thanks," said the Viscount's uncle. "Crumbs don't show on this suit."

The Viscount suffers in just the same way. Once, when we were leaving Buckingham Palace together, I proposed to give him a lift in my hansom.

"You don't fool me," he replied. "When once you're inside there won't be room for a garden ladder, much less a lift. Besides, how high do you propose to go?"

That is the Viscount all over. He has no imagination; at least, not what Bertie and I call imagination.

"No," I repeated, "it won't do."

He looked pained.

"Markiss," said he, "you should really be more careful who you say these things to."

At that moment the door opened and my wife entered. Nobody has more regard for my wife than I have, while the Viscount professes a respect for her second only to the venera-

tion he feels for the Viscountess; but at that moment her appearance was inopportune. Wives are so thoughtless in these matters. I remember a man once who had just taken his two young cousins upon his knee. Neither was more than six-and-twenty, and one would have supposed that nothing could be more natural than his action; but his wife happened to open the door just as he was arranging to take them for a fishing party to the Seine. The latch had recently been oiled, so that they did not hear her till the expedition had been planned down to the present they were to give the guard, while she was too well bred to interrupt them sooner. When she did speak it was to modify their arrangements so materially that all the fun was gone.

I call that shabby.

The Marchioness is not quite so inconsiderate, but, like other women, she frequently puts a wrong construction upon things.

"What has he been saying to you, Viscount?" she asked.

"Only that my cuffs are getting frayed," he answered.

Now, I don't object to a man telling a lie now and then. Often it is necessary. But I do object to his telling a bad one. The Viscount happened to be wearing only a flannel shirt and a dickey: one of those things you fasten with a safety-pin to your waistcoat, and then you wonder how long the arrangement will continue. Of course my wife became restless. Women are so absurd.

[Et cetera, et cetera. By introducing humorous anecdotes and illustrations, this conversation can be prolonged through several chapters. The mosaic thus constructed is, I believe, technically termed "mirth-provoking."

We shall now go on to a still funnier chapter, dealing with the adventures of the Marquis and his friends on their clandestine trip to Monte Carlo. Their noble consorts have been hoodwinked by an affectation of ill-health which renders a change to Southend necessary, and with their motor-cars and valets packed in the van, our frolicsome hereditary legislators start by special train for the Riviera. We are now arrived at what is called the "side-splitting" portion of our narrative.]

At Paris we awoke Bertie and told him he must put on his boots.

"Paris is a modern city," we said. "Its customs are almost identical with ours; therefore you must clothe your feet."

To this perfectly reasonable request Bertie replied that he had an aunt who had once been to Paris, and she had never told him anything about putting on her boots when she arrived there.

"It stands to reason," he argued, "that these absurd precautions are unnecessary. I have come to enjoy myself, and not to obey the dictates of an obsolete convention."

When Bertie gets into this humour there is no doing anything with him. He reminds

me of the lady who was travelling to Siberia with a menagerie. "What is good enough for these fine creatures is good enough for me," she said; and so when she reached the frontier she refused to give up her ticket. The officials tried to persuade her, but it was no use, so they sent for the Governor, or the Satrap, or whatever the gentleman is called who wears gold lace and accepts a salary of fifty thousand annas or roubles or francs for doing something or other.

"You must either give up your ticket or travel with the man-eating shark," he said to her.

"I shall not give up my ticket, and I shall consider myself fortunate to have such a companion," she replied.

So she entered the tank with the shark, and they have travelled together ever since—in fact, they are said to be inseparable.

That is Bertie all over. He just sat on the man-trap affair—the thing they fill with ice water and place on the floor to break your shins—and declared he would like to see the Frenchman who would make him move. Presently the door of our carriage opened and a moustache appeared. A little way behind the moustache we noticed a man, while out of its thickets proceeded a voice. The voice said something we none of us understood.

"He wants to have the carriage ventilated," said the Viscount, smashing a window

in his hurry to open it, and upsetting two cases of champagne on to my head.

But still the moustache continued to make noises,—even more energetic noises than before, it seemed to me.

"You Johnnies don't understand the language," I said. "Leave him to me."

[And at this point we can leave him too. The adventures which follow are in the same merry vein, and while causing our intelligent friends some passing perplexity, do not materially impede their expedition.

But before we part company altogether I should like to show you how amusing a place even a country-seat can be made to appear when viewed through the interesting personality of our Marquis.]

Just then my valet came in to tell me that Tootles had left the bathroom tap running since five o'clock last night. Tootles is not, as you might think, a plumber or a water-bailiff, or even a shareholder in a reservoir; he is only the baby. His real name is the Earl of Blowmetite, but he is called Tootles from his habits, just as Bertie is called "Nips," and I am sometimes politely referred to by my intimates as "'Arry."

"Well, you Juggins," I replied. "Turn it off again."

"But the armoury and the blue bedroom is flooded, my lord, and the charter-chest has floated out into the shrubbery, and nobody daren't go near it, for the bull-dog thinks it's his kennel."

"Give him a bone," I suggested, "a juicy succulent bone, and talk to him kindly. Say you knew his mother, and won't die happy till you have his photograph. You don't know how to manage dogs, that's evident."

I am afraid my valet was scarcely as grateful for this advice as he should have been. He merely said something about not having lived in an idiot home long enough to suit this place, and backed out. I always make my servants back out. It makes me seem more like the Prince of Wales. The great joke is to get some one to shut the door, and then watch the poor man trying to back his way through it. Even the Marchioness laughs, while the Viscount had to be brought round with a meat lozenge after watching my butler endeavour to perform this feat for twenty minutes on end one day.

I must frankly say I was annoyed by this accident. The charter-chest contains the only receipted bill I have ever possessed, and a very fine collection of manuscript Summonses; while the blue bedroom is Aunt Gwendolen's favourite retreat. She was coming to stay with us on Friday for the Hunt Ball—I don't mean the little ball of laudanum I give my hunters when they run in a steeplechase, but a kind of thing where people dance in pink coats and shout "Forrard away!" when the band plays "John Peel." As I am generally

the senior nobleman present, I have quite a good time of it. My social position has its drawbacks, however; I never seem able to be funny without getting a little vulgar, and my wife thinks a Marquis ought to be as polished as our front-door handle. I reminded her the other day that I was not that kind of knob, but she only

exclaimed, "Fitz-Algernon, get along with you!"

And so forth, till you have written the necessary number of words demanded by your publisher — and, my dear nephew, for the Lord's sake, stop there!—Your affectionate and well-intentioned UNCLE.

V.

MY DEAR NEPHEW, — The particular branch of art to which I am now going to draw your attention is that termed Realism. By this phrase is meant making your tale seem as like real life as possible—that is to say, what would be real life to you supposing you were a dyspeptic driver on an underground train or a melancholic bankrupt applying for a divorce.

Assuming that you are enjoying neither of these experiences, the question you will naturally ask is, "How am I to adopt the necessary point of view of an existence that has hitherto seemed tolerable enough?"

Well, in the first place, I should recommend a lowering diet; then counting the ticking of a large clock for eight or nine consecutive hours should also prove of material assistance; till after three or four months of this treatment you should be near enough the requisite standard to attend to some directions concerning the method in which these idylls are constructed.

Suppose you set out from your apartments in the Albany upon a meditative ramble, in which direction would you naturally turn? Towards the Park or some other pleasant and amusing region, of course.

Realism turns towards the slums of Soho, and the dirtiest amongst those.

What would naturally attract your attention and give the twist to your thoughts? The pretty faces, the humours of the street, the brightest and most attractive things you passed,—it goes without saying.

Realism attends to the ash-buckets, the smell of the fried-eel reservoirs, the bottle-nosed loafer propped against the wall.

And what would stick in your memory when you came in? Surely the two or three unexpected encounters, the incident that was a little different from other incidents.

Realism remembers the number of the lamp-posts passed, the pattern of the pavement flags, the specks of the everyday dust floating in the air.

And it is this that Realism calls a picture of life. Hence the necessity for a special course of preparation before handling its delicate tools. The reiteration of the unimportant and the obliteration of the picturesque are the two aims you must keep steadily before your eye. Here, for instance, is an instructive fragment, which suggests for its title 'The Man and the Egg,' or 'The Desirability of Zero.'

The maid-of-all-work knocked for the second time upon the door, and her ill-shod feet shuffled downstairs again. With a characteristic noise, between blowing and groaning, James Robinson raised himself in bed and felt for the handkerchief which he always kept beneath his pillow in case of nose-bleed. It was not there, and he remembered that he must have left it beneath the towel-rack with his boots. Accordingly he had a stronger incentive to rise than any stimulus which had prompted him for some weeks. First placing his left foot upon the linoleum of the floor, he followed it with his right, and finally stood erect, blinking at the murky light which straggled feebly between the dusty slats of the Venetian blinds. It was a cold morning, and he shivered a little; besides it was Tuesday, and ever since the evening spent in Mr Star-rat's bar-parlour, when he had contracted a slight chill, he had always shivered on Tuesdays. A faint whiff of an unsavoury odour came down the

chimney from some other apartment, a beetle crawled slowly across the floor, and the sound of shrill drunken altercation reached him through a crack in the glass.

He had long intended to cover this crack with brown paper; but, as happens to so many men of his temperament, brown paper was a substance he had taken an almost morbid aversion to. It suggested parcels; also string and other things foreign to his disposition.

[And so on, till the desired effect of a muddy flatness has been obtained. "Why should the reader endure all this?" you may ask. For the same reason that he watches with a fascinated shudder the centipede crossing his table-cloth. He does it, and he pays you for it. Let that be sufficient.

We shall now plunge into the vortex, the Maelström, of the plot, and see if we cannot give our enthusiastic admirers their money's worth. But first perhaps we had better say a word or two about our hero, in case they might not accurately realise what an attractive specimen of vulgarity they were studying.]

James was average in all respects save those in which he fell below that convenient standard. He was spare of chin and pale of face, with projecting upper teeth on one side, and a curious gap, caused by biting upon an uncracked nut, on the other. His lips were thin, yet sensual, his mouth large, but devoid of all traces of character. Rather below

middle-size, and slightly and unbecomingly moustached, he was further, by a happy mixture of nature and art, chronically dejected in aspect. Naturally timid and hesitating to the last degree, and absorbed only in himself and his digestion, he had been so kicked by his companions that he had finally assumed a carriage which seemed an invitation for every passer-by to repeat this process.

[If this hero does not satisfy our public, I am far out of my reckoning. Let us now behold him in the fields of thought and conduct.]

"Egg morning," he said to himself, mechanically repressing the faint emotion which this reflection caused, for he was well aware of the insignificance of incidents.

Still buttoning his waistcoat with his left forefinger and thumb, he descended the unwashed stairs and entered the parlour, for which he entertained a dreary dislike.

[Minute details of things calculated to destroy the appetite introduced here. He is next seen at breakfast.]

"If cracking this egg were worth doing," said James, "I should leave it alone. It is merely because it is not that I propose to eat it."

Having thus salved what in another man would have been his conscience, he raised the knife in his right hand and balanced it irresolutely over the egg.

"My dear James!" exclaimed the Egg, "you overlook a most important point."

"That is why I overlook it," said James.

"Yet it is a matter which would distress you afterwards. I assure you the lifting of my crown would be to me an almost dramatic incident, and the insertion of your spoon a romance. Be consistent, James; your motto is monotony! Apply it, then, to the universe."

"But an egg is so small a thing," grumbled James. "Surely its cracking can't matter."

"I might become a chicken," said the Egg. "Who knows?"

"But you have been boiled."

"Not very hard."

"But if I allow you to become a chicken, that will be an important event," said James, almost pleased by his own acumen.

"No, I assure you," replied the Egg. "It has happened to so many eggs already."

"Unfortunately I am hungry," said James.

[Observe the brevity and unadorned directness of these sentences. A touch of grace, a happy turn of phrase, a suggestion of pleasing sentiment; and the reader's spirits might begin to rise. Whether he would then throw the book away I cannot tell you, but that some such dreadful result is probable seems clear from the fact that the masters of this form of fiction never employ any of these devices. Possibly their own spirits would get elevated, and then their occupation would be gone; though why they should not become capital skate-fasteners instead is not so clear.]

But to return to our romance. James sluggishly makes up what he calls his mind to crack the egg.]

"It must be done," said James feebly.

"Lay your hand upon me first," replied the Egg in a chilly voice.

"The devil!" cried James. "You are cold."

"I am grown cold indeed, quite unpalatable and highly indigestible now, I assure you."

"Well, after all," said our hero, "I have missed the point of my morning, which is always something."

"Everything, my dear James, everything. If you go on like this you will succeed in missing the whole point of your existence. You have begun the day well."

This fragment is not intended to be interesting, or amusing, or edifying, otherwise it would

not be realistic. If Realism has any aim at all (which many exponents of this school would indignantly deny), it is to cause in the reader a depression similar to that enjoyed by the author. Yet the rules permit it to bait its hook with one inviting worm, which I regret that my relationship to you forbids my employing. I allude to that series of phenomena which forms also the subject-matter of the smoking-room story; only instead of treating these incidents as humorous exceptions to the respectable routine of life, you, with a serious face, perpetually remind your reader that they make the real atmosphere which he breathes at every inspiration. When in time he comes to believe this and act accordingly, such reward as an artist may claim is surely yours.—Your affectionate and well-intentioned
UNCLE.

VI.

MY DEAR NEPHEW,—It has struck me that supposing (as is probable) you inherit some of those qualities I myself possess, you will desire now and then to coruscate or glitter. This is a perfectly legitimate ambition, and it can easily be accomplished with a very little trouble, and practically no thought at all. Indeed you will soon find yourself upon some sleepless night emitting as it were a kind of phosphorescent light, just to relax your mind and keep you from serious and disturbing reflections. Then, perhaps, next

morning, if it is too wet for outdoor exercise, and you have no one to play ping-pong with you, you will sit down and "throw off" (as it is technically termed) a story of the kind I am about to illustrate.

And the delightful part is that people will in consequence give you credit for all sorts of original and daring ideas—so potent is a popular formula.

In constructing such a work, a certain amount of latitude is permitted in the matter of what I may call *intensity*. That is to say, you may draw down the corners of your

mouth, and in a pungently satirical manner sjambok the hollowness of anything that some good authority has previously pronounced hollow. Or you may lean back in your chair and smile upon the world with a flippant cynicism that is very engaging, to women particularly. Or you may simply trust to the frequency of your epigrams and the excellent social position of your characters. In the sample that follows these different methods will be skilfully blended.

As to the plot, two rules only are necessary to bear in mind. It must not be very interesting, for that would distract attention from the sparkling dialogue; and it must be well seasoned with a strong political flavour. Nothing impresses your readers so much as an intimate acquaintance with legislation and cabinets and that sort of thing, and to acquire this intimacy it might be almost worth your while to spend an afternoon in the House of Commons just before you begin.

Attend now to this pretty opening shower of wheezes (though of course I would not use this vulgar term in writing for the public).

"Warm weather does not suit me," remarked Lady Oucherelab.

"No," replied Lord Beryrose. "It is like my party, out of place at present."

[To assist the reader in identifying living celebrities beneath the veil of art so cleverly thrown over them, I have in-

vented this ingenious system of nomenclature. Many a family circle will be delighted by their cleverness in guessing who is really meant by Lord Beryrose, for instance: and afterwards they are sure to recommend the book to their friends.]

"You go to the House to-night?" she queried.

"As the plummet to its sounding," he retorted, with a half-ironical inclination.

The innuendo was lost upon Lady Oucherelab, but the significance of the tone arrested her attention. They were standing in the ante-drawing-room of the Duke of Lane-chamber's mansion in Park Lane, and it was on the eve of a general election. Lord Beryrose expected to come into power again; his friends were less sanguine; while his enemies declared that his views on the subversion of undenominational loans would effectually bar the door. As Sir Manbanner Bellcam said—

"When any one can tell me which way the proletariat will vote, I can tell him where to look for the next Prime Minister."

[Does not this show an astounding knowledge of statecraft? Yet I had nothing by me but a Whitaker's Almanac when I wrote it.]

"Who is that young man with the pre-Raphaelite chin and the white shirt front?" asked a young girl of the man she was talking to.

This was Gwendolen Twodelltwyd, the most admired beauty of the season. Sir Manbanner

compared her to an anæsthetic mounted in mother-of-pearl, and the simile was generally considered appropriate. A man will often say the thing *de rigueur* which a woman will think *au sérieux*. Or *vice versa*.

The man Gwendolen addressed was the Honourable Neil MacSwift, a rising under-secretary to the Budget. He replied with a smile.

[But this gentleman's epigrammatic response you can easily invent for yourself. The point I would have you note is the telling staccato of the style. The sentences seem quite separate and disconnected, and this is so unlike ordinary works of genius that it gives your pages an exceptionally brilliant appearance. It is also much easier to do.]

We shall now perform a similar feat with the narrative and leap from his grace's reception into an incisive and masterly analysis of our heroine. Our readers, instead of feeling annoyed by this crevasse-vaulting, will only attribute to us a superhuman cleverness. "Such scintillating talent cannot be bound by ordinary rules," they will say.]

Gwendolen sat by the window. Her highly balanced nature shrank repugnantly from the touch whereof was social annihilation. Strange, is it not, that when a woman lacks ought the world suffers accordingly?

[This is very searching.]

At fifteen she had been religious, at seventeen tall for her age, at twenty revaccinated,

and now she was dressed in pale mauve. A woman who has been through these experiences can no longer be described by one adverb. *Au contraire*.

[The depths of woman's nature are here probed. Now, without any warning, for a skip into a lighter vein.]

At that moment Lord Belgravia entered.

"My watch has just stopped," he smiled.

"How like a watch!" she exclaimed. "Now, when mine stops, do you know what I do?"

"Wind it up," he suggested, "like a company?"

"No; I discard it, like a small suit."

Their eyes met, and both smiled. He thought he had never seen her wittier.

[And no more he had in the present volume.]

"Talking of suits," he observed, "I went to my tailor's this morning, and do you know what he said?"

"I cannot guess, unless it was to assure you that you could carry off a larger cheek than most men. Tailors generally say that, I believe."

"He did indeed suggest a larger cheque," he flashed. "And that is why I look depressed."

He passed his hand nervously across his flat white forehead and sat down upon the corner of the table. A man prefers a table to a chair, just as a Minister prefers a canon to a bishopric. Socially this is right, anthropologically it is indifferent, occasionally it is immoral.

"I was dining last night with Mr Fourbal," she said, presently. "How is it that when one dines with a statesman a cold *entrée* invariably follows the fish?"

"I have often wondered," he replied, with a sympathetic smile that seemed indefinitely to cement the understanding between them. "And another thing that perplexes me is where to look when I hear my title being announced in a loud whisper by my hostess."

Gwendolen laughed.

"It is just the same with me," she said, "when I overhear my host telling some inquisitive duchess that I am the cleverest girl in the room."

"You are frank," he smiled.

"And I am fond of oranges; so what virtue is left to strive after?"

[Observe carefully the ingredients of this salad of persiflage. They are all quite cheap and within the reach of the most moderately endowed author. Yet what an effect they have when skilfully mixed! The aristocratic allusions cost absolutely nothing: the most ordinary incidents of the dinner-table and the clothier's shop supply the groundwork; and the happy turns of phrase need scarcely half an hour's practice. Yet hundreds of pounds can easily be made in this way. Who would not be an author?

Before finishing this letter I shall give you a short sample of another kind of necessary incident. It shows the statesman in *déshabille*—that is to say, gracefully unbending in the privacy of his retiring-

room in Downing Street. You yourself will feel when reading it an additional emotion of respect for one who can thus hob and nob with the Great: though, not to dismay you, I may admit at once that it was only by inquiring of a policeman at Charing Cross that I discovered where that thoroughfare was situated.]

Fourbal's face relaxed into a smile.

"Really, politics amuse me almost as much as women," he remarked.

"You pay your profession a high compliment," said Lady Quithas, who had just looked in on her way from a *séance* at the Persian Embassy. "The enthusiastic Premier is so refreshing!"

"Oh, he only said that for your benefit, Lady Quithas," interposed Bobby Cravatte.

He was the Prime Minister's young cousin, spending the day with him on his way to Eton. Already he had discovered that eating bon-bons in Downing Street had not the same relish as *al fresco* junketing. To be young is to be juvenile, just as to be bald is to be hairless. Who has not made the same reflection once in an æon? And who has not forgotten it?

"Really, Fourbal, you must get a new tapestry for this room," said Lady Quithas.

"We have not yet paid the Exchequer," replied the statesman. "Everything at a discount—one thing at a time."

"Is that clever?" asked Bobby innocently.

"It would be," replied Fourbal, "if——"

"If what?" said Bobby.

"If it were not," smiled the Premier, almost without any hesitation.

Does this sound a little silly? My dear nephew, people pay for it. Is it pointless? Well, you get your cheque. Am I sure it is worth doing? But an author must live. We cannot

all be diamonds, but we can at least make passable paste. And, if we do not give the secret away ourselves, there are many millions of people in the world who will actually be deceived.

But is this honest, do you ask? My nephew, art is not morality—and if it were, most of us would still remain untrammelled.—Your affectionate and well-intentioned UNCLE.

VII.

MY DEAR NEPHEW,—I have now provided you with a sufficient number of models to enable you to make a beginning, and it only remains to wish you good fortune in your mission. What I have endeavoured to show you is how to make it pay (both as to pocket and reputation), assuming that, like so many other literary missionaries, you have nothing in particular to say and no very clear idea of how to say it.

Sometimes I may have seemed to conceal a trifle of unkindness beneath a studiously genial manner; but then you see I have literary ambitions myself, and, like Mr Witwould and Mr Petulant, I do enjoy being a little "severe." Nobody (un-

less it be you) is ever likely to heed what I say, even though my words were steeped in the acid of the most forgotten truth; so why should I not write to please myself?

Were there anything in letters corresponding to the studio and galleries where a painter learns his business, such instructions as I have given would be impertinently superfluous. But unluckily there is not, and each man must pick up the craft as best he can. Here—to change the simile a little—is a bundle of patterns. Of which stuff will you make your story? Or do you think that excellent opening in the City should be reconsidered?—Your affectionate and well-intentioned UNCLE.

HOME THOUGHTS FROM AFRICA.

BY PERCEVAL GIBBON.

DEAREST, my heart is in mourning,
My soul is in pain,
And I yearn to the hills and the heather
And the sea-beach again,
To the rain-riven crags of the mountains,
Close under the lea,
Where the gulls go up to the ledges
And down to the sea.
From this land of the limitless vistas
And hard iron skies,
Where the veldt and the clouds fade together
Out of range of the eyes,
I long for the shouting Nor'-Easter,
The salt of the gales.
Dear, send me to comfort my exile,
A word out of Wales!

Is it all as we knew it together?
Is it yet as of yore?
Do the breakers, the crested free-lances,
Gallop up to the shore
With their tumult of battle and laughter?
Can you see how the ships
Stagger seaward away under tops'ls
From the murderous lips
Of the tiger-fanged bay and its currents,
Where the galleon was drowned,
And the drift-wood we stored for the winter
Came safely aground?
And up to your hearth in the evening
Does the clamour still reach
Of the hoofs of the sea on the shingle,
The scream of the beach?

I can taste it with lips of remembrance,
And the eyes of my love
Refashion the desolate marches,
The storm-drift above,
The bay with its narrow horizon,
The cliffs which confine
A world that leaves nothing to Heaven,
Your world, dear, and mine!
The beach, like a glistening gangway,
Melts far in the grey,
And hastening from sand into silver,
So trembles away;
While the shawls of the oockle-wives gleaming,
Red drops on the haze,
Are like blood on a priestly apparel,
Assaulting the gaze;
And yonder, far out and hull under,
Scarce seen for the foam,
Some prodigal child of the ocean
Goes seaward and home.
There are rocks, too, strewn widely to Westward,
By weed overgrown,
A river cascading in granite,
Tempestuous stone,
Where the charge of the breakers is shattered,
Their crest overcast,
And the raiders that leaguered our fastness
Are broken at last.

I can see in the deeps of my fire
Our cave in the rocks,
Whence we watched the white horses stampeding
In strenuous flocks;
And the seventh wave is ever the biggest,
Deep-bosomed and bright,
A phantom of luminous opal
That froths into white.
And he thunders a saga in passing,
For you and for me,
Of the wonderful doings out yonder
At large in the sea.

Then evening walks over the waters,
Like Christ on the lake,
And strides past the beach and the marches
With night in its wake.
I wonder will you have forgotten
How oft and again
We strove with the night for its secret,
Nor wrestled in vain:
Two children that probed the eternal,
And strong in our youth,
With God for a kindly familiar,
So won to the truth.

Dearest, I think you'll remember,
When heart-deeps are stirred,
The love which we bore one another
That needed no word.
'Twas a part of the life that possessed us,
Pervaded the days,
And though childhood be reft of its treasure
That memory stays.
As the scent of the incense inhabits
An altar of old,
As honour is strong and immortal
When the ashes are cold,
One dream is the friend of my exile,
Nor lapses nor pales:
Your face that exulted to seaward
Home yonder in Wales!

WINTER ON THE SOUTH DOWNS.

LOOKING southward from the Forest Ridge, which extends throughout the greater part of the long county of Sussex, traversing the Wealden mid-way between the North and South Downs, the rounded outline of the range of chalk-hills appears continuous, save for the gaps through which the four little rivers—the Arun, the Adur, the Ouse, and the Cuckmere—find a passage to the English Channel beyond. But on closer inspection other valleys will be found. Those leading to Brighton and Worthing may very probably have been the main factors in locating those well-known seaside resorts by making them easy of access in coaching days. Besides these valleys others lead northward from the coast, and terminate without intersecting the outline of the “Front Hill,” as the northern escarpment is locally called, and thus obtaining protection from the winter blast, and sheltering homesteads little known except to those who hunt the fox and hare, and follow their quarry to their native haunts. The human habitations are found in the lowest, and therefore most sheltered, positions—no doubt on the site occupied by lightly built huts which, from both material and structure, needed all available protection from the prevailing south-west gales, which still cause the stunted thorn-bushes of the ridges to take the eastward

position, all the longer branches being on the sheltered side of the stem.

In such dwellings lived our ancestors of the stone age, and for what a long period that age extended may be gathered from the large quantity of flint celts, scrapers, borers, and arrow-heads still to be found in these localities. The surrounding hillsides are scarred by ancient cultivation, showing most distinctly after a drifting snow has filled up the indentations, leaving them as white lines when the thaw has revealed the surrounding green turf: often returning frost preserves these phenomena until they become well-defined landmarks.

Flocks of seagulls frequent these valleys during their frost-bound condition, drifting up from the coast at a time when land-birds, driven by hunger, are often passing thither. “Chinton hounds” the shepherds call them, and point them out as prognosticating stormy weather; the cliffs at Chington, near to the bold headland of Beachy Head, being a favourite habitat of the screaming gulls. How much their movements resemble that of hounds as a party of them sweep along the hillside, feathering to and fro like a pack on a cold scent, I have proved many times by excitement taking possession of the horse between my knees, and the quickened pulse beating beneath the saddle as the dove-coloured and speckled

birds are mistaken for the pack of "dappled darlings," as Kingsley calls them. For years I had wondered for what purpose the gulls quartered the frozen field so systematically. Occasionally they stoop to pick up earth-worms, but why these stray annelids should present themselves on the frost-bound surface was a mystery, and it was thought that the dried-up body of some wanderer overtaken above-ground by the first frost must be the attraction, until one winter's day I was crossing a frozen field,—where on a moist summer evening you find the surface alive with earth-worms, so that the ground literally vibrates as they withdraw into their burrows before advancing footsteps,—when a worm, evidently in distress, forced its way through the herbage, dashing its attenuated body from side to side as if suffering agony. Lifting the creature clear of the soil, the cause of its contortions was at once evident. What I at first took to be a carnivorous centipede, but which afterwards proved to be the larva of one of the carabid beetles, had fixed its formidable forceps firmly in the tail-end of its victim, and was making a meal of the extremity; and although carried suspended for some distance, failed to disengage itself, even when hanging and supporting its own weight by the curved jaws. Victor and victim were dropped together into a box of damp earth to await issues, and next morning the worm was found to be bitten in two pieces; but, contrary to popular

belief in the vitality of worms, both portions were dead.

With this incident came the idea of an explanation of the mystery of the "Chinton Hounds:" this vicious little insect is the seagull's provider. Hunted and molested in his subterranean tunnels, the worm, pushing its way into air and daylight above, falls victim to the hungry birds. "You must shoot gulls and prove your theory," remarked a naturalist to whom the idea was submitted. Never had I raised gun against the "bright bird of the tempest," and I remarked that dozens might have to be slaughtered before evidence was obtained, but was told that in the cause of original research sacrifices must be made.

The season passed. The eve of the close season for sea-fowl came before a chance occurred, or inclination allowed, for commencement of slaughter, when a large flock was observed beating up a hillside, and in so doing, crossing one of the roads locally called Bostals—deeply worn trenches cut out by centuries of wheels and feet, combined with frost and rain, in the soft rock chalk. Taking advantage of this means of approach, the last individual drifting past was dropped on the turf above, and on climbing the bank I found the bird quite dead, lying on its back, with the black tips of the long wings waving in the wind, showing the large white "mirrors" on the first three feathers distinctly. An incision into the

body was quickly made, for decomposition is swift in action when aided by gastric juices, and on the gizzard being opened not even a remnant of worms was to be found; but on turning towards the gullet my touch was sensible of a soft substance, and my fingers drew forth the somewhat mangled body of an earthworm, and, still attached, the larva of a carabid beetle, and with recollections of Euclid days, "*Quod erat demonstrandum*" escaped my lips, with a feeling of satisfaction that but one sacrifice was necessary. Enclosed in the gizzard of a redwing I have since found the remains of the same insects, but could not prove that both were swallowed together; but these, with fieldfare and other ground-feeding birds, benefit, as the larvæ are hungry for several months in early spring.

Within a few days of the shooting of the gull the birds discontinued their visits to the valley, either to return to their nesting-places, or it may be that the larvæ had passed into the pupa stage, and so had ceased to trouble the other denizens of the soil, and to drive them into upper regions of danger.

On the snow-covered ridge of the highest cultivated land of the Downs I noticed one morning some black objects standing like mutes around a pall. On nearer approach they prove to be carrion-crows—old acquaintances—the well-known depredatory crew who nested

in the tall beech-trees in the Holt on the northern escarpment. I have seen the parent birds picking up the small hill-snails diligently in the early hours of a moist spring morning, with all the semblance of innocency as I passed on horseback, as if they had no guilty knowledge of the disappearance of all the partridge-eggs that were laid on that particular spur of the range. The object which attracted them was expected to be the remains of a sheep, one of those wanderers driven from the flock and natural gregarious habit by the pressure of hydatid on one lobe of the brain, causing them to run round in circles until they fall to rise no more. Contrary to expectation the central figure arose—a gaunt-looking dog-fox, with that rough-looking, patchy coat usually attributed by hunters to the exertions of a long run before the hounds. It is one of those theories so difficult to prove, yet which pass from generation to generation as one of the uncertain quantities of wood-craft which so much add to its interest. A neighbouring master of foxhounds of large experience told me that he had yet to hear of a normal fox. When described to him they were always "a huge of a great 'un," or else "a little bit of a thing no bigger than a cat," the inability to prove giving licence to exaggeration.

As the fox rose and fixed his attention on me, the crows stepped forward to secure chance morsels of bone and flesh detached from the loin

of a hare, as their ally tore it up for his breakfast, and flew away when instinct told them I was within gunshot; but their comrade seemed disposed to resent the disturbance of his meal, swinging his drooped head from side to side, as the larger carnivora do in their caged life, until at last, yielding to discretion, he turned tail, with a show of teeth as he glanced back over his shoulder. I saw him do the same, if I mistake not, some weeks later for one moment; but that moment was his last. We had found a fox in the adjacent gorse-covers twice that season, which had led us off the range into the vale below, heading due north as if for the forest ridge of the Wealden, the hounds following with good scent until meeting a road running parallel with the hills six or eight miles away, at which point on each occasion scent had failed. The hounds had been cast forward in widening circles, and tried back, on the supposition that the fox had been headed in the road; but they were unable to trace him to earth or drain, and pursuit was given up,—the run being chronicled as a good fox unaccounted for, with the hope that, before the hunt season closed, chance would give another opportunity of trying conclusions.

We found a fox on one of the last hunting days in a gorse-covered valley nearer the sea than the spot where I had seen the crows waiting upon their patchy-coated pro-

vider, but on reaching the Front Hill the pack divided. Another fox had been disturbed by hounds running, and, as the greater number kept to the line leading to the vale, a whip was despatched to stop and bring on the other portion. The descent of the hill accomplished, the pace quickened as we galloped across the black, corn-growing belt of the upper greensand into the soft gault pastures beyond, fetlock-deep after the winter's rains; then on to the sounder land of the lower greensand formation, to sink again into the wealden clay, often bounded by a chalk stream, negotiable here, near its source, with a strip of alluvial meadow beside it, such fields being locally termed "lags"—favourite feeding-grounds for the flocks of peewits before they break up for the breeding season.

Reaching a small oak-wood, we push on our horses to try and get a view away, if by chance our quarry may have turned in it, only to find the hounds racing clear of the cover to the northward again, heading for a black-thorn thicket. Surely this must check the pace; but no. We emerge on the far side, to see the leading hounds a field away, plunging into a stream enlarged by several tributaries to a width which turns the field to seek bridge or ford; and we only overtake the pack in the fatal road before mentioned. The huntsman pulls up his horse, and gives them time as they search with flap-

ping nostrils for the tainted line through every rabbit-run in the farther hedge, and feather out in the pasture beyond, and then back to try the spot where they last touched scent, only to drag back to the road again, till at length an old hound marks a spot on the dusty roadway and traces it for several yards inch by inch, cheered on by the huntsman. She swings her hind-quarters and stern from side to side in frantic fashion, as if to show her desire to advance, if the olfactory nerve would only allow. Other hounds hearing the cheering voice come to assist, but fail to touch the scent among the dust; but after the old hound has worked forward four or five hundred yards, they hit it off on the same side of the road we had approached, and carry it through the meadow beyond, across the brook again into a small spinney, to break into loud chorus on hot scent on the far side as we cross the bridge again and overtake them on reaching another roadway.

There is a halloo a field away, and as we take the next fence we get a view of the dragged mud-stained creature glancing back at his pursuers as he creeps from a shrubbery beaten and crest-fallen, his brush trailing on the ground,—a very different appearance from that assumed as he reluctantly left the feast of hare, which he shared with the crows that winter morning. With ears turned back and show of teeth he dodges the

leading hound, only to present a broadside to the pack. The avalanche sweeps over him,—did he live ten seconds after the first contact? I think not. How savage hounds are at the kill,—a strange contrast after all the altruism shown during the run by signal of voice and tail. Feuds break out on the effort of each individual to get his teeth into the mangled remains and swallow every morsel of the carcass. After the huntsman has cut off the head, tail, and feet (or, in hunting parlance, the “mask, brush, and pads”) as trophies, not a picking for the crows is left.

While hounds crowd together in breaking up a fox, or in their endeavour to enter an earth or drain in which their quarry has taken refuge, the large proportion of white tips to their sterns is very evident. These, no doubt, in long grass or low gorse are waved as signals. How often have we seen hounds working among thick herbage lift their heads and start with ardour towards some waving semaphore worked by a comrade, advertising that she has touched the tainted line, though not of sufficient strength to permit the throwing of tongue, or even a whimper. But to what advantage the white tag, so often seen to terminate the fox's brush, could be used except as an ornamental appendage, remained for many years a query. It certainly is a disadvantage as he steals across a dark woodland ride, when he would otherwise have been taken for a hare, and avoid the “Tally ho! over!” which gives

hounds such an advantage on a bad scenting day.

Watching for migrants early one spring morning from a spot sheltered by thorn-bushes overlooking a somewhat narrow valley, I noticed on the opposite side a piece of rufous colouring conspicuous on a grassy lawn enclosed by a belt of dark-green gorse. When trying to discover what this red object might be, my attention was attracted by the arrival of a brown vixen, looking much like a small lurcher dog, from having a mere stump of a tail. I knew the history of that missing member. It had been bitten off and brought to our keeper by his Dandy Dinmont terrier "Dan'el" from a rabbit-hole in the very bank on which I was seated. We concluded that the cub must have been changing her teeth at the time, or she would not have submitted to such an indignity. Whether a call-note was uttered or the light footfall was heard by the fox (for such the red patch then showed itself to be), I could not decide. Some sense had communicated the approach, for he rose with tail erect high over his back: the white tip, made obvious against the dark background, was waved as a welcome, or it might be as a signal that the coast was clear. Entering the outside belt of gorse, the vixen emerged on the lawn, rubbed noses with her mate, and disappeared into the thick bushes beyond.

The shepherd lad, whose flock fed this part of the

range, told me that the short-tailed mother reared three cubs that summer, and expressed the opinion that hounds would never overtake a fox that was not handicapped by the weight of a brush! The truth of this piece of folk-lore was disproved soon afterwards—although, undoubtedly, without a fair test. During a run which commenced on the hills and led to the northern end of the Devil's Dyke, the hounds marked their line to a well-known earth, adjoining which a black-thorn thicket grew, into which several of the pack strayed, and, after several rushes through the stout stems, began to quarrel as over a kill. The whip crept in beneath the thorns, and presently appeared again, feet foremost, dragging the brown vixen. "Not the fox I viewed away from cover, sir," he remarked, *sotto voce*; "he must be gone to ground." To save the condemnation of the master falling upon the earth-stopper, the change of quarry was never disclosed, although wonder was expressed that the fox had not taken refuge in the subterranean stronghold, after having so evidently headed for that goal.

Passing on foot over the ridge on the Down before mentioned, thoughts reverted to shallow pits through which the ploughs were driven in cultivation, turning over the red tertiary clay with which some of these hills are capped, in which Professor Prestwich discovered those palæolithic flint implements which have

given such antiquity to man of the stone age. The wind and atmospheric conditions were right for a fox to lie there—should I walk a hundred feet out of my way on the thousand to one chance? Taking the choice, I was fully repaid, for there, on the sheltered side of the pit, lay a fine fox, his red coat matching exactly the clay on which he had found or scratched out a hollow, his tail curled round to keep his feet and nose warm, the tip passed up his mask to form a white veil to the eyes,—it may have been to protect them from the March dust blowing across the fallow. He did not hear or see my approach, and although the temptation to awake him with a view-holloa within six yards was great, he was left to sleep on in anticipation of a find some other day.

Much of the arable on the Downs is too far from the homestead for the corn to be carried to the rick-yards in the busy harvest season, so it is stacked in or adjacent to the field in which it grows. This practice is often adopted, now the horses are busy on the self-binding reapers, and the oxen—who formerly were given holiday at this season—are employed on waggons to gather the sheaves. Being yoked together in pairs, they strongly object to travel down the steep rutted road leading to the valley, often laming themselves, by injuring their dew-claws through crowding, or being crowded by their yoke-fellow into the ruts. The wily rooks take advantage of the isolated

position of these stacks to pilfer the contents during hard weather. A white cockatoo, doubtless escaped from captivity, lived a life of liberty in a large rookery near, learning bad habits from his associates the rooks. The scansore's feet played havoc with the thatch, tearing it off to reach the ears of wheat below, and so letting in the rain and snow, much to the detriment of the condition of the grain. When flying, his appearance was very striking among his black comrades, he being usually described as a white rook. His ultimate fate I have never been able to ascertain.

If the number of deaths of birds caused per mile by the telephone-wires is as great on all as on the wire that runs along the ridge to serve a holiday resort, thousands of birds must perish annually from this comparatively new danger. I found cripples in a valley nearly a quarter of a mile to the eastward of the wire, and as I only pass that way about once a fortnight, no doubt many more fall victims. The first was a yellow wagtail with broken wing, being quite unable to fly. A stroke with the silk end of my hunting-lash secured me a good specimen in close season, but I did not then recognise the cause of danger. With spring migration was found a crippled wheatear, hiding in the shelter of the clods, then a damaged skylark, and next a yellow-hammer which had dropped directly under the wire, and so explained the process of cripple-making. I have since noticed

partridges, rooks, sparrows, &c., which have suffered the same fate. In very severe seasons flocks of snow-buntings visit the Downs, and one sees them drifting before the storm like large snowflakes, different specimens showing very uncertain quantities of white in colouring, the variations being most striking as the flock passes from land covered with stunted heather across a snowdrift, the white plumage showing distinctly against the former, the dark against the snow. They search the oat-stubble for scattered grain, feeding in snow-time on the seeds of the taller grass stems, and stray ears protruding from the corn-stacks, with the common bunting, or clodbird, and that commonest of Down birds, the yellow-hammer. Occasionally, also, the twite, or mountain linnet, driven from its northern home by lack of food, winters on the hills, feeding on the seeds of the dwarf thistle, each bird leading a solitary life—a contrast to the native brown linnets, which, throughout the year, except in the nesting season, are always to be seen in parties, and keep up an incessant sharp, but pleasing, note to prevent members of the flock from straying. This gregarious habit often proves their doom to captivity, as they cannot pass the call-birds placed by the side of the clap-nets of the fowler, these being frequently canary and linnet mules, raised in the company of the latter, and giving their note in louder voice, the chorus from many small cages producing an infatuation in the

wild linnets, which drop to feed with the decoy-birds placed within the nets, and so fall victims to their gregarious instincts.

The bramblings appear in small numbers on the advent of hard weather, uttering their loud harsh call as they pass to their feeding-grounds at day-break, but arriving in larger numbers, presumably from the southward, in the month of March, on their return migration, just as the oats are being sown in the light upland soil, taking toll from the seed deposited by the drill, by removing the earth above it with the strong beak with which nature has provided them. One would pass by bramblings as chaffinches, were it not for the white patch above the tail, so noticeable as they fly up beside you. At the same time flocks of meadow pipits, of a darker colour than those which have wintered in the sheltered valleys, pass along the range, probably migrants who have assumed spring plumage in some southern clime. After them come the pied wagtails, also in summer dress, chasing each other with many a twist and turn, noticeable by the striking contrast of black and white in their plumage, to be followed by the smaller variety of wheatear. Amid the later snowstorms this bird would seem to return across the Channel, or, it may be, retires to the depths of its favourite rabbit-holes, as they disappear from sight until spring weather returns again to the South Downs.

ERNEST ROBINSON.

POEMS BY GIACOMO LEOPARDI.

Translated by Sir Theodore Martin, K.C.B.

TO THE IDEAL LADY OF HIS LOVE.

BEING beloved and exquisitely fair,
Who from afar
Inspirest me with love, though from mine eyne
Thy features veiled are,
Save when in slumber lapp'd, at whiles,
Or roaming in the fields on some bright day
Of days, when Nature smiles,
Thy dim-discovered form divine
Thrills to its very core this heart of mine,
Perchance it was thy lot, in days of old,
To bless the race of mortals here below,
In that pure age of innocence,
Which has its name from gold;
And now, mayhap, a spirit of the air,
Thou fliest, all impalpable to sense,
Through haunts where mortals fare,
Or else thou art withheld by grudging fate,
That keeps thee in reserve for some far future date.

Thee, living, never may I hope to see,
Unless it be,
When stripp'd of the vile husk that wraps me here.
My spirit, all alone,
Shall wing its flight by new untravell'd ways
To a strange home within a world unknown.
My youth was sad, and purposeless, and drear,
Yet even then thou wert to me, in thought,
As one who sojourned on this barren sphere;
But, like thee, now I know, on earth is nought,
And even although some one should there be seen,
Who did in countenance, and voice, and mien,
Resemble thee, somehow,
She would, how like soe'er, be far less fair than thou.

If 'mid the sorrows manifold, that fate
Doth to our mortal destiny assign,

Some one on earth should be so fortunate
As to love thee, fair as thou art in sooth,
And fair as in my thoughts I picture thee,
How blest with bliss supreme his life would be!
And clearly do I see,
Thy love, if it were mine,
Would make me fame and virtue still pursue,
As in my days of youth
It was my wont to do.
But heaven vouchsafes no solace to assuage
Our miseries here; and life on earth with thee,
If haply such a life to me were given,
Would be the sum of all we dream of heaven.

Oft in the valleys, where the song resounds
Of the hard-toiling tiller of the fields,
I sit me down, and mourn
Youth's sweet illusions, that have left me lone;
And when I climb the hills, and call to mind
And sore bewail the aspirations high,
And hopes of other days, now overthrown,
If then I think of thee, away I cast
These broodings of despair!
And oh, if so I could,
In this vile age, and fell envenom'd air,
Keep ever present in my heart and brain
Thine image, pure and radiantly bright,
As then I see it, this were enough for me,
Although thy embodied self on earth I ne'er might see.

If of the Ideas Eternal thou art one,
And wilt not let thy immortal spirit be
Clothed in a vesture palpable to sight,
And in a fragile frame, foredoom'd to death,
Submit thyself to sorrow and to pain,
Or if thy home be in another earth
In some supernal sphere, amid a host
Of worlds innumerable, and a star more fair,
And nearer to the sun than ours, irradiate thee,
And thou dost breathe a more benignant air
From here, where few and evil are the days,
Of an unknown adorer deign to accept this hymn of praise.

THE LONELY BIRD.

FROM the high top of yonder ancient tower
Thou, lonely bird, o'er all the land dost shower
Thy song unceasingly, till daylight dies,
And up this vale thy music finds its way.
Spring sparkles in the air,
Makes the green meadows gay,
And the heart melts to see a world so fair.
Hark to the bleating flocks, the lowing steers!
And all the birds but thee,
How glad they be,
As high in air they wheel in circling spheres,
And hail their happiest time with sportive glee!
Thou pensively look'st on, but keep'st aloof;
Thou wilt not mix with them, thou wilt not fly,
'Gainst every flush of joyance thou art proof,
And scan'st their frolic moods with scornful eye.
On, ever on, thou singest, letting so
The year's and life's best gifts all unregarded go.
Ah me! How like thy ways
Are to mine own! Pastime, and frolic play,
The sweet companionship of boyhood's days,
And love, the inspiring soul of manhood's dawn,
And of the old man's days the enduring sigh,
I care not for, but why, I cannot tell,
Yea, far away from them am fain to fly,
And hermit-like, unknown, forlorn,
Even there, where I was born,
I let life's springtide run unheeded by.

This day, that into eve is fading now,
Is ever in our bourg a holiday.
Joy-bells, I hear them borne upon the breeze,
And cannon thundering near and far away!
Young men and maidens, clad
All in their best array,
Come forth, and scatter through the streets, to see
And to be seen, with happy hearts and glad.

I to this spot, out in the fields, remote
From public haunt, repair, alone, alone,
And every pleasure, every jest, postpone
To some hereafter season ; and the while,
As through the golden air I peer and peer,
The sun, that after a delightful day
Behind the distant mountain sinks, its glory o'er,
Departing seems to say,
Youth, blessed youth, is gone, and will return no more.
Lone little bird, when thou shalt reach the eve
Of what of life thy stars to thee allot,
Thou of a certainty wilt not
Over thy ways of life complain or grieve ;
For all thy impulses forlorn
Were at thy birth inborn ;
But I, if such my fate,
That I perforce
Must linger out my course
Into old age, the thought whereof I hate,
When kindly smiles in other eyes that shine
Wake no response in mine,
When unto them the world looks blank and void,
And each new morn
With suffering is alloyed,
And darker and more cheerless is than yesterday,
What then to me will my lone reveries seem ?
How of myself shall I, how of these lost years deem ?
Alas ! I shall repent me, all too late,
And evermore on them look back, disconsolate.

VANCOUVER AND VICTORIA.

THE first morning call which I had occasion to pay in Vancouver was a little startling. I found my friend sitting behind a beautifully polished set of steel bars that reached from floor to ceiling. He looked quite happy and contented, and was dictating a letter to a very pretty type-writer. When he saw me he rose, took a key from his pocket, opened his cage, and then locked me securely inside. By-and-by another man entered, carrying a heavy parcel tied round with string and sealed with many seals. This he passed in between the bars, and M. took it, out the strings carelessly, emptied out a lot of gritty yellow dust on to a pair of scales, weighed it, put it into a tin box, locked it up, wrote out a receipt, and handed that, together with a key, to the man outside, and then returned to his seat. A few minutes later a big spectacled man, in his shirt-sleeves, said he guessed he was ready now, and M. and I followed him into the next cage. Here there were four gas-furnaces, with coils of pipes forking off underneath them. Each furnace had a hollow lid that fastened over it, and they looked like big sewing-machines. When the lid was down it was so cool that you could rest your hand on it quite comfortably; when it was open you had to be careful not to look too close, for fear of getting your eyes scorched. The big man took a crucible like a large flower-pot, and put in a few spoonfuls of white powder from some bottles that were labelled Borax Glass, and Carb. Potass, Carb. Soda, and Pot. Nitrate. Then he threw in the gold-dust, stirred the contents up, and put them on the furnace. Then he shut down the lid and waited. By-and-by he opened it again, and the mixture was a dull, semi-opaque brown. Next time it was bright red, and next, glowing white. The cook picked up a crowbar made of plumbago and began to stir, peering at his work through his spectacles, and then turning away and blinking. The assistant cook brought up a heavy iron mould, nicely oiled up inside, and put it on the kitchen-table close to the furnace; his boss took a pair of iron pincers, hung them to a hook on the ceiling, gripped hold of the crucible, and swung the hook round till it hung over the mould. Then he pulled on a pair of asbestos gloves that looked as if they were made of very thick, rather dirty cotton, and tilted the pot up, the contents running out in a stream of faint translucent red. This he allowed to stand for a quarter of an hour or so, when the surface had cooled and caked to the shiny black of patent leather, and then he turned the mould over and whacked it with a hammer. When he lifted the mould up there remained on the table a brick of brassy yellow, crusted over with black varnish, which

he dropped hissing into a bath of sulphuric acid. It was a good deal cleaner when he picked it out, but the varnish still remained adhering here and there to the roughened surface, so he put it under a running tap, and chipped off the larger bits of slag with a blunt nail, and brushed the whole thing with a wire brush, till there remained a brick of pure gold. That is, relatively speaking, pure gold, because the exact fineness had still to be determined. For this purpose he took a keen chisel and shaved a thin slice off each of two diagonal corners, and handed them to the assayers in the back office.

Everything there, including the men themselves, was scrupulously clean and tidy. Each assayer takes his little slice of gold, weighing a quarter of an ounce, and rolls it into a thin ribbon, which is cut in pieces. From a box of silver buttons he takes enough chemically pure silver to make $2\frac{1}{4}$ parts of silver to one of gold, and wraps the result up in a sheet of chemically pure lead, and puts it in a "cupel," which looks exactly like a bit of billiard chalk, and is made of bone-ash. The cupel is put in a furnace and heated up to 900° Cent.; this burns off the lead, which is deposited in a green stain on the bone-ash, and leaves a "bead" of gold and silver like a small pill. Then he takes a tiny basket of platinum, divided off into thirty-six little compartments, each of which holds a baby thimble. He drops the pill

into a thimble and lifts the basket by a plain wire hook,—just a bit of bent wire which you would not stoop to pick up in the street,—and lowers it into a little metal bath full of nitric acid, half strength. This separates the gold from the silver, and the whole apparatus cost £50 or £60; the hook alone costs £5. The remaining gold is then weighed, and the weight compared with that of the original sample.

Meanwhile the other assayer has been working independently on his sample, and if the two results do not agree to two parts in ten thousand, the whole process has to be gone over again. The scales are made of gold plating and aluminium, with agate bearings, because iron might become magnetic, and they are kept under a glass case. Behind the index was an ivory rule, marked off into twenty divisions, ten on each side of the index. The assayer asked the Boston girl if she could spare him a hair of her head, and she pulled one out and handed it to him. He remarked smilingly that it was much too heavy, and, snipping a tiny piece off one end, so small as to be almost invisible, he dropped it with a pair of fine tweezers into the scale, whereupon the index ran swiftly along the rule and stopped at No. 6. These men can guess the approximate fineness of their samples at a glance with extraordinary accuracy, but they say that the precision and close attention required in the work tells horribly on the nerves.

We saw gold in dust, and gold in nuggets, and gold in cakes like soap, and gold in slabs, and gold in bricks, and gold in ribbons like wood shavings, chemically pure, and worth \$26 to \$27 per ounce intrinsically: the commercial value is, of course, still higher. Then M. unlocked his cage and let us out into the sunlit street.

There were Chinamen trotting about in short black or blue blouses, with wide sleeves that came down far over the tips of their fingers, so that they could muffle each hand into the opposite sleeve. Their trousers were loose, and on their feet they had white canvas sabots, and their pig-tails hung down beneath soft black felt hats. Farther east they coil their pigtails up, presumably to escape the attentions of the Canadian small boy. The Indians dressed more like white men, though their features were decidedly Mongolian, and they showed a preference for straw hats with turned-down brims. We saw wee little China boys in pink silk pyjamas, and Japs in bicycling suits, with knickerbocker breeches, and heather stockings with loud-patterned "turn-downs." On the electric car that took us out to New Westminster was a negro lady in a Panama hat, white "shirt-waist," and blue serge skirt. We ran out of the slums of the town into a cloudy, acrid-smelling fog of forest fire; through a charred wilderness of burnt stumps; and then down a long avenue cut through a green and red

undergrowth of fern and tangled coppice. The stations were little huts with seats inside and steps leading up to them, looking like tiny sentry-boxes under the towering firs. We could hear the tinkle of the cow-bells in the clearings, and once a magpie flew close to the car and made me feel homesick.

The run of salmon was pretty nearly over by this time, but it would never do to be at "The Coast" and not to see the canneries. The trouble was that the canneries didn't appear to be particularly anxious to see us, for they were placarded conspicuously, "No admittance without an order from the office," and when I went to the office to ask for an order I could find nobody in. So I returned to the barrier, and approached a long desperado, in shirt-sleeves, and a wide felt hat worn over one ear, and asked him how we could get in to see the show.

"Walk right in," he said, with a look of surprise.

"But the door's locked."

"Then come along with me," and he unlocked a side wicket, and escorted us into a big shed where a jabbering crowd of Chinamen were busy soldering up innumerable tins of salmon in bright-red chunks. He pointed out the cooking retorts; and the little guillotines where the fish are shoved head foremost through a shutter and swiftly decapitated; and the cleaning tanks; and the punching-machines that cut the salmon up into crimson discs; and the great annexe where

"the fish were two and a half feet deep on the floor last Sunday,"—rattling off his explanations at such a pace that we gave up following him in despair. Then he carried us off to the office, and ran us panting up a flight of stairs which had escaped our notice, flung the door open, addressed the boss affectionately by name, waved an introductory hand towards our party, said "My friends,"—he hadn't the remotest notion who we were,—and sank into a chair, still in his shirt-sleeves.

The boss evinced no surprise at our intrusion, but lay back in his seat and talked. He told us that there were five or six varieties of so-called salmon in British Columbia: 1st, The quinnat, chinook, or ty-hee (chief), commonly known as the spring salmon, varying from 10 to 70 or 80 lb. in weight, and plentiful on the coast from November to April. 2nd, The steelhead, less common, but claimed by Prince to be the only true salmon in British Columbia. 3rd, The blue-back or sock-eye, preferred for canning purposes on account of its richer colour, although its flavour is not so delicate as that of the preceding two. This fish averages under 11 lb., and runs in immense shoals during the months of July and August. You can see a couple of thousand boats fishing at the mouth of the Fraser at the same time, and they will catch from one hundred to five hundred fish each a-night. The name "sock-eye," by the

way, has nothing to do with the eye, but is derived from *sa-kwi* (phonetic), meaning "fish" or "salmon" in the Kwantlin dialect of Kawitshin. 4th, The cohoes, or silver salmon, run later than the sock-eyes. They are less prized for canning on account of their paler colour, but authorities claim that, when caught in salt water, they are infinitely superior as a table fish, though not so rich as the ty-hee and steelhead. 5th and 6th, The dog-salmon and humpbacks, which are not commercial varieties, and are never used except by Indians.

The Atlantic salmon have only nine or ten rays in the anal fin, while nearly all the British Columbian varieties have from fourteen to twenty. The ty-hee and the steelhead will take the fly, the others are trolled for in the bays near the cities of the coast. "This fact," says the Year-Book of British Columbia, "gave rise to the fiction that for a time gained credence, that the British Commissioners appointed in connection with the determination of the North-West boundary between Canada and the United States gave up the States of Washington and Oregon as not worth contending for, because the salmon in the Columbia River could not be tempted by the wiles of the sportsman. It was a piece of pleasant and effective sarcasm directed against the supineness of the British authorities in the matter, but nevertheless a fiction." The Texan Ranger claimed that all the

Atlantic fish, including anchovies, and even deep-sea and small soles, could be caught here. When the boss doubted the latter statement, he offered to take him down to Point Grey and catch him a basketful any day he liked to name.

There is another variety of the Salmonidæ, called the "oolachan" or candle-fish, which runs up the Fraser about the middle of April. It is of delicious flavour, but, according to the Year-Book, too tender for carriage, and has, therefore, only a local market. It is about nine inches in length, and so plentiful as to be scooped up in buckets. The boss informed us proudly that he had on one occasion frozen some, and sent them to Sir William Van Horne, then President of the Canadian Pacific Railway, who had them for breakfast on his private car at St John's, New Brunswick, and telegraphed to say that they were excellent. This shows that they can be packed so as to travel successfully across the North American continent. The heads and tails, and refuse generally, are put on board a steamer and shipped off to be converted into oil for machinery. The Fraser River salmon are shipped to England over the C.P.R., and also round the Horn by sailing-ships. The Alaska trade, earlier in the season, is almost entirely confined to the United States. The rest of our interview was spent in listening to caustic remarks about the unfairness of allowing the Americans to fish without any restriction as to

the length or depth of nets, the use of traps, or the observance of the Sabbath-day.

There was a sun-splutter of gold through the pines as we returned, and the couchant lions that guard the gates of Vancouver Harbour were bathed in a shimmering haze of opaline mist. Inland the smoke of the forest-fires lay heavy on the mountains, and to seaward were innumerable small islands glittering in a ripple of silver. Next morning we steamed out of the harbour, shaving past a grimy old collier which had been bumping round the Horn during a considerable portion of the previous century, and which now lay lovingly alongside the spick-and-span, white-hulled, yellow-funnelled *Empress of China*. Beyond them was a regular fleet of ocean tramps, and black and red lighters; of big Scandinavian sailing-ships, long-prowed canoes from the milky waters of the Squamish River, and little, impertinent, white launches, all funnel and whistle, who greeted us with aggressive hoots, just to show what a volume of sound could be produced from a very small hull. Then we swung round through the Lions' Gate, under the Capilano Mountains; past the dark-green giant firs of Stanley Park, washed in with red and yellow splotches round the feet; and left the myriad islands of Burrard Inlet behind us. On our right was a steep hill, thick-timbered with bare bristling trunks; the water was a hard bright green in the sun, mottled with black patches of cloud shadows; little yellow

chalets were perched on grassy points; and, very far ahead, we could discern the faint wavy line of dim blue, where the sky seemed to be melting into the mountains, and the mountains into the sea. There were pale grey cliffs striped with vivid orange lichens, and a whole fleet of little fishing-smacks with deep red sails that slanted into black in the offing. By-and-by, as the breeze freshened and the faint haze cleared away, we could distinguish deep bays and inlets running into the shore; and the snowy coast ranges seemed to detach themselves gradually from their background.

It was some time before I could take my eyes off the scenery to look at the passengers, and then it struck me that I might have been on board an English Channel steamer, if it hadn't been for the Chinamen. The farther you get from the prairie, the more English do the people become; and you begin to realise why the correspondents on the late royal trip felt more at home here than in any part of their journey round the globe. There were a few Americans. One couple in particular, a mother and a daughter of about seventeen, from Central Oregon, had been spending the summer in some faraway nook in Alaska, where the girl had learnt to paddle a dug-out without upsetting it. They appeared to belong to the class of well-to-do farmers, and they travelled every summer alone together to out-of-the-way places, from sheer love

of it, and were full of odd bits of information about the places they had visited. Some of the Chinamen were smiling and good-tempered, but many of them were lean-jawed, with the fleshless faces, sunken eyes, and old-ivory skin of confirmed opium-smokers. Others were fat, pasty, and epicene, with a nameless something about them that recalled certain passages in Juvenal. There were broad-shouldered men who stood firmly on their feet, with their hats a shade on one side, and their hands in their coat-pockets; and the captain of the ship might have stepped out of Frith's picture of the Folkestone boat arriving at Boulogne.

Ahead of the steamer was a wide strip of calm water, that lay like a pale mirror framed in rippling green. The edges were so clearly defined that I suspected the existence of a breakwater, *à fleur d'eau*, and it ran out, straight and rectilinear, for miles from the shore. It was the mouth of the Fraser river, which Vancouver missed. There was a big bell-buoy swinging lazily to and fro on our port bow, and long masses of driftwood beneath the white houses of Steveston and the smoke of the canneries. The islands grew higher and steeper farther on, and the water in their shadows was almost black. Suddenly a great white column seemed to leap up against a tawny cliff and then vanish, where a huge black-fish was spouting; and the seals swam lazily within pistol-shot of the steamer. As

we neared Victoria I asked a man, whom I took for a travelling Englishman, but who turned out to be a Cabinet Minister in the British Columbia Legislature, to recommend me a hotel, and he immediately took charge of me, with the hospitality that you meet everywhere at the coast. He pointed out the principal places of interest, telephoned on our arrival to order me a room, and finally drove me to my destination himself, having stopped on the way to put me up at the club. That is another reason why Englishmen feel at home in Victoria.

The hotel was more than two miles from the city, on the shores of an island-studded bay, with a rocky point running out directly in front of the verandah. I walked out to the end of this next morning. There was a fishing-boat on the dancing, sparkling water close alongside, and everywhere round were islands,—brown islands, and green islands, and red islands, and islands of seaweed, and long folds of grey smoke athwart another inlet farther east, overtopped by the pine-clad dome of yet another island beyond. About the middle of our inlet was a white lighthouse; and opposite us was a rounded grey hill shouldering out of the sea, blotched here and there with pines, and marked with wavy lines that shone like pale silver in the sun. This was the island of San Juan, which was awarded to the United States by the Emperor William of Germany

on October 21, 1872. It is never sportsmanlike to question the decision of the umpire; but you realise here that San Juan commands the Canal de Haro at its narrowest point, where it is only five miles across. To sail up the centre of the channel in a big ship entails passing within two miles of the island, and its only value is for strategic purposes. It could be of no possible service to the United States except for offensive use against Great Britain. The reasons for his Majesty's decision were no doubt weighty and conclusive; but the average British Columbian is convinced that he was solely actuated by the knowledge that the United States Government would have kicked harder against an adverse award than would the Imperial authorities at Westminster. The mainland was heavily forested, with chalets, tents, and bungalows tucked away among the trees close at hand, and far back in American territory were the glistening peaks of the Olympian range. The verandah was fringed with rubber plants and begonias, and even the conductor on the electric car had carnations in his button-hole. The gardens of some of the houses we passed on our way down town were at least equal to anything of their size at home. Everything about you is so suggestive of rustic England that it comes on you like a sudden shock to see a yellow-faced Chinaman shaking a foot-rug out of a bedroom window. By degrees you realise that Victoria is one of the most bewildering spots

on the globe. It is a combination of old-fashioned English civilisation and of wild, virgin wilderness, for the interior of the island is still practically unexplored. You hear the tinkling of cow-bells, and you look up at the snowy mountains and down at the bay, and begin to wonder whether the Alps have been uprooted and dropped on the sea-shore. When you were on the prairie, "the East" meant Toronto and Montreal. Here it means China and Japan. You leave the club with a man who is as European as if he had just stepped out of Piccadilly, and walk along the wharf past half-a-dozen canoes, with long fish-tail prows, and fibre mattings inside gleaming with salmon-scales. Their crews are the aboriginal inhabitants of the North American continent; and five minutes later you are under the shadow of a joss-house in Chinatown. You look at the heads of walrus and bighorn and caribou and moose on the walls of the billiard-room, and feel as if you were near the Arctic Regions; and then you look at the flowers and the fruit, and begin to wonder whether you are not in California after all. It takes a man with any imagination at all a long time to get "oriented" in Victoria.

Not only the people in the streets, but the streets themselves, have an English look about them: you even see private carriages with coachmen and footmen on the box. It is true that in Chinatown the posters on the walls are a vivid orange decorated with

strange brush-mark characters. But the houses are not the high, narrow, many-balconied buildings that one associates with a Chinese quarter. You enter a handsome shop that might belong to a tobacconist in the Strand, exchange a few words with the pigtailed proprietor, and then pass on into the back-kitchen. Here you find some sixteen or eighteen little furnaces, with large flat pans on them, and half-a-dozen cooks making toffee. It doesn't smell like toffee, though it looks like it, but has a sickly penetrating odour of its own which clings to your nostrils all day. Now and then a man shuffles up and lifts off one of the pans, lets it cool a little, and splits off a top layer of hardened scum, while the smell becomes more oppressive than ever. In a big box nearby are dozens of large cocoanuts, or overgrown potatoes, which, when you examine closer, you discover to be lumps of dried poppy-leaves, adhering so close as to form one homogeneous mass. Outside in the backyard are big caldrons of the mixture cooling off, after the final stewing. Two or three of the cooks are smoking long pipes with very small bowls, and the smokers have a glazy look about the eyes. In the front shop you can see a number of white earthenware jampots on shelves, and the proprietor lifts down one of them and shows you that it is two-thirds full of rich black treacle, and tells you that it is worth seven or eight dollars. There is another big china jar near the door with a dozen pipe-

stems sticking out of the top, looking like so many walking-sticks. At the first shop I entered I asked if these were opium-pipes, and the owner promptly denied the charge. So I thought there was no harm in looking at them, and picked one out, and found not only that it was an opium-pipe, but also that it had been used quite recently. It was a relief to get back into the open air.

A little lower down the street was an ordinary square building, with a shop on the ground-floor, and a staircase with plain whitewashed walls, leading apparently to business offices above. I climbed up after my guide, who seemed to know most of the population by name, opened a plain deal door, and walked into a room that was ablaze with colour—a kaleidoscope of polychromatic screens; of huge fans and flags of silk and peacock feathers; with trophies of halberds, and spears, and battle-axes, and shields, and strange brazen helmets ranged round the walls, big cylindrical umbrellas hanging from the ceiling, and barbaric lanterns alternating with modern arc-lights in every corner. A polished brass railing ran across the floor, and behind it was an altar with a sort of bas-relief of beautifully carved metal work covered by a sheet of plate-glass. On the altar was a sort of curtained alcove, with eight or ten bearded gods sitting inside, and an enormous drum in front of it: it was impiously suggestive of a Punch-and-Judy

show. Then there were trays holding glass tumblers full of joss-sticks, some of them still burning; swords, and fans, and long flag-poles, that, instead of flags, were surmounted by huge wooden hands grasping a dagger or a Brobdingnagian lead-pencil; kneeling-pads, cheap spittoons, and a big, grey, anvil-shaped ashlar, that looked as if it might have been used for sacrificial purposes. To a foreign devil the general effect was simply bewildering, because the decoration was so crowded that it was impossible to pick out the details.

While we were looking through the joss-house there was a curious sort of sing-song jabbering going on behind a door that faced the one at the head of the staircase. The attendant in charge nodded affirmatively when we asked if we might open it, and we found ourselves in the Chinese school, with a benevolent-looking, spectacled schoolmaster sitting up on a dais, correcting examination-papers with a red paint-brush. The children were perfectly charming, dressed in all sorts of gaudy silks, and beautifully clean;—the small girls with their hair elaborately plaited down their backs, and little gold earrings; and the small boys taking advantage of our diverting the master's attention to be guilty of every sort of devilment that the mind of oriental youth can devise. One diminutive damsel stepped on to the platform, handed a number of sheets of thin tissue-paper to her teacher, turned round, folded her tiny hands

behind her back, and began to sing her lessons in breathless haste and at interminable length. There was a broad flat strap lying on the desk, and when I picked it up and whacked it on the palm of my hand with an interrogative look at the dominie, that long-nailed instructor of youth answered with the nearest approach to a wink that his dignity would permit. There was a black-board, and red and black sheets with Chinese hieroglyphics on the wall; and big Chinese maps; and a Chinese god framed at the end of the room: and those small heathens were just as keen on pulling one another's hair unawares, and tying themselves up in knots under the desks, as if they had been Christians.

In the afternoon we went out to Esquimalt, the naval harbour of the British Pacific coast, and saw the unlucky *Amphion* in dry dock. There was a crowd of bemedalled and be-ribboned American tourists on board, and a couple of officers standing near the gangway were invoking blessings on their heads for taking up the time of the crew and interfering with work on the ship. So, in spite of their protestations that they didn't include us in the same category, we slipped away back to town, and played scientific croquet on a close-shaven lawn, that was as true and accurate as a billiard-table. The name "Esquimalt" is pronounced with the accent on the penultimate, and is derived from three Indian words, Is-whoy-

malth, meaning a place for gathering "camass," a root for eating.

Before the legislative buildings of British Columbia were erected there was a certain amount of rivalry between Victoria and Vancouver as to which city should be finally chosen for the seat of Government. The Victorians carried the day, and determined that if heavy expenditure would do it they would anchor the legislature there for good and all. So they spent a million dollars, and raised the finest public buildings in the Dominion: a great white palace, surmounted by a statue of Vancouver that glistens like gold in the sun, with broad shaven lawns of bright green in front, and a wilderness of marble columns, and stained glass, and rounded domes inside. One wing is used as a museum, and here you can see stuffed moose, big and ungainly; and fur seals with tiny ears like little shrivelled-up shreds of leather; and mountain sheep standing stiffly on feet that look too small to support the bulk above. One specimen, marked "Ovis Fannini, Oct. 1900, sp. nova," was a grizzly grey from shoulder to croup, and down the legs, the rest being pure white; a kingly looking individual, who contrasted strangely with the rich, red-brown velvet of the "dusky" wolf beneath him. There were carved bowls inlaid with chips of abalone shell, and Alaskan hats with twelve or thirteen crowns one above the other, like the head-gear of a Jew salesman by George Cruikshank. Near these were Haidah

hats of beautifully woven fibre, coloured green and blue and red. There were life-sized masks of tinted wood, with moustaches and eyebrows of seal-hair; and jumping-jacks used for ceremonial purposes; metal helmets; and big, oblong, wooden drums that are filled with water to vary the sound, and beaten with policemen's clubs,—all the varied curios of a museum, which are never so interesting as when you are living in close contiguity to the people who produce them.

Victoria claims to be, *per capita*, the wealthiest city on the Pacific coast. In honour of the coronation they determined to provide dinners for all those of the population who were too poor to celebrate the occasion themselves. But the banquet never took place, because the bishop and clergy reported that, after a diligent search, they had been unable to discover any indigent parishioners.

Since the old days, when the Hudson's Bay Company started the Indians chopping down trees, and built a high wooden enclosure of plain whitewashed walls, with one bastion enfilading the front and south side of the square, and another defending the back and north side, the town has developed and become a centre for lumberers, gold-miners, fur-traders, and inland and deep-sea fishermen. In 1843 it was known as Fort Camosun or "Rush of Waters," after the tide-rip that races up the Victoria arm. The country round somewhat resembled an English park, with clumps of oak, and rows and glades of

spruce and fir; the rich soil being broken up in patches by croppings of rock, and thick with fern and ryegrass. To-day it combines the advantages of an English seaside town with an unexplored hinterland. Many of the men you meet belong to the army or to the navy, or have been educated at universities and public schools; or else they are in the habit of associating with such men and have assimilated their manners and ideas. The bank clerk, who in most Canadian towns is the curled darling of society, is relegated into comparative obscurity, from which he has to emerge by his own efforts, and not by the mere accident of his official position. It is—*pace* certain newspaper correspondents—quite rare to see the stars and stripes floating side by side with the union-jack on the business buildings in the town; the people have more time for leisure,—perhaps they make it,—and therefore more culture; they do not consider that they "acquire merit" by talking shop out of office hours. It is the fashion in Eastern Canada to talk of British Columbians, especially at the coast, as being "slow," and the climate is certainly not so keen and bracing as that of the prairie. The annual mean temperature at Victoria is 47°·65 as compared to 48° at Birmingham and 33° at Winnipeg. At Spence's Bridge on the Fraser River, 175 miles inland, the mean annual temperature is 48°·31—actually higher than that of Birmingham. Still they managed to

build a city like Vancouver in sixteen years, and this performance has yet to be surpassed in the rest of the Dominion.

I was lucky enough to have a friend whose house occupied one of the highest points in Victoria. You walk up a somewhat dusty hill, and enter a stone gateway, with a coat of arms carved, in old-country fashion, in the coping. Parallel to the drive is a long line of standard roses, and behind them an orchard of plums, and pears, and apples, with close-cut grass round the roots of the trees. The house itself stands on the summit of the hill, and all round it are outcroppings of bare rock, bordered with moss and flowers. Part of the rock has been blasted away, and three Chinamen are busy doubling the size of the croquet-lawn, which lies, a bright green patch, islanded among oaks and fruit-trees. There is a big verandah round the four sides of the building. On the landward side is a green deep-bosomed valley, where a group of eight or nine giant Douglas firs towers high above the oaks. Far away to the south-east you see the peaks of the Olympian range, snow-streaked and gullied, with a long belt of clouds gradually dropping down their flanks, and beneath them the steely-blue waters of the Straits of San Juan melt into Puget Sound. On another side the Cascade Mountains fade away into the distance. Mount Baker hangs, flushed ethereally with faint hues of

tourmaline crystals, above tiers of dim blue foothills merging into the purple and green of the spruce-forests. Big four-masted sailing-ships are lying in the flashing waters of the Royal Roads; the islands are flung broadcast, like a largesse of jewels, over the straits and inlets; and close at hand you hear the twittering of birds and the dry, crackling flight of the oicalas.

Inside the house is a big hall, panelled with British Columbia cedar, the walls covered with Indian curiosities. There are Chilkat dresses, and painted hats; a "Chilkat blanket," or ceremonial robe woven of the hair of the wild goat, nearly six feet long and fifty-seven inches deep,—including a fringe of two feet,—hangs beside the staircase. The colours are blue, black, and yellow; and the design intricate and as conventional as heraldry, its real meaning being lost in the mists of antiquity. There is a cedar-root crown, the headpiece of a Hámitsa; and the rag-doll of a Shaman, or medicine-man. There was another sleeveless coat, designed on one side with the bear totem, and on the other with a double-headed eagle, evidently copied from the Russian flag! There were jumping-jacks and ghost-figures; fibre neck-rings from the cannibal sect of the Kwakiutls; a beautifully carved face of a Nit-i-nat Indian, with a flattened nose and protruding under lip, the moustache, pointed beard, and eyebrows being made of bearskin fur; the staff of a Chilkoot chief, carved in tiers;

a head-dress of five rows of ermine, with ten ermines to the row; horned devilkins with long protruding tongues; aprons with fringes of little deer-hoofs; a shoe-shaped box with a snap-lid, used as a "soul-trap," and held over the mouth of a dying man; and a genuine "copper," the most valued treasure of the chief of the tribe. This is a sheet of native copper, cut in the conventional design of the head of a halibut,—actually resembling a flat, wide violin, with a T-shaped ribbing down the middle of the handle and across the lower half of the face. The value of this T, for some mythical reason, is about three-fifths of that of the entire instrument, though the area it covers is comparatively small. When the chief has given away, or destroyed, all his possessions at a "potlatch," just to show what an important personage he is, he falls back on his "copper," and

breaks off a small piece and casts it into the sea. If his rival's heart fails him, then the victor's copper "scores" that of his opponent, in exactly the same way as small boys at school "fight" with horse-chestnuts hung on bits of string. This particular copper had lost about one-fifth of its surface, broken away in similar contests.

At the risk of being accused of Society journalism, I will add that the library contained several books, bearing on the history of the Province, which are not to be had in the British Museum, and that the dining-room also, walls, floor, and ceiling, was entirely constructed of native woods; but that I cannot tell you what they gave me to eat, because I was always staring out of window at the view. There may be lovelier cities than Victoria in the world, but it has never been my luck to see them.

CHAS. HANBURY-WILLIAMS.

CHILDREN OF TEMPEST.¹

A TALE OF THE OUTER ISLES.

BY NEIL MUNRO.

CHAPTER XVI.—A CONFESSION.

INDEED Bride's wand had given the magic touch to Anna. In days succeeding that one—golden, and for ever to be remembered—when she floated in a fairy galley to the verge of Tir-an-oig, she went about fevered with her happiness, so that her presence brought the sourest an infection, and Ludovick, ever the child of fancies, extravagant to madness in a brother, surely, sometimes thought he saw her in an aura, such as one may see in pictures of the saints. From morning till evening she sang, if not aloud, in throaty murmurings as the pigeon coos in spring. Even Ludovick, that had never known her otherwise than sweet—the very essence of that womanhood 'twas his willing but cruel fate to lose in a great renunciation—sometimes waked to wonder what was this so novel in her. Birds, that she had liked always, now became her passion; much she loved to press her lips in the heart of the flowers that scantily grew in the shelter of *Stella Maris*; for her brother she showed an affection almost devouring. He pondered on it long, this change in her, and came to the conclusion that she suffered

from some fervour of the religious spirit, and at that he was alarmed to find himself regretful, thinking of the nunnery. Once he tried to discover her mind upon the matter. It was a day on which she had been more than ordinarily radiant. She had said something of his sermon, expressing her agreement with its great convictions.

"Anna," he said hastily, "I hope I have not of late been too eloquent. I would carry conviction to these dear souls, and give them, if I could, the supremest joy that is in fellowship with Christ and the saints, for theirs is a destiny poor when that is wanting. But you, my dear Anna—you—you——" He hesitated, afraid, as it were, of his own words. "You are as good as I would care to have you. I am not going to have you any different, do you hear? No different. You always reminded me of our mother—peace with her! Where she was, there was Paradise, if her acts were to be judged from the sentiments that inspired them. It is enough of religion for you to be like her. I wish—I wish sometimes—perhaps I am a

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poor priest and unworthy,—I wish you were less often of an evening on your knees in the chapel there alone.”

She reddened, distressed to think how far had been her thoughts from spiritual things often when she went to these orisons.

“A reasonable practice of it,” he added, “is enough for such as have a shrine in their hearts, and make an altar of the table they spread daily with love and kindness for others.”

Anna felt she must either laugh or cry. The guilty sense of deception knocked in her breast. She had for weeks been loading her brother with attentions, lest he might suspect this sweet unrest in her; and to show she had too well succeeded, here he was crediting her with the fervour only of the devotee!

She looked across the table at him, and her sense of humour got its way. She laughed, much to his disconcerting. “O Ludovick!” she cried, “upon my word I am ashamed of you! That I should hear such heretical doctrine from the priest of Boisdale! Myself too good, indeed!—*oh right!* and I your sister, and I have never learned a tune on the harp. Father”—she went on, chanting in an intonation—“I will confess. Let me think—yesterday I lost my temper with poor Gaisgeach and called him *son of the devil*, only it was in the Gaelic of course, because he slipped his bridle in the field and would not let me catch him. Then I had cream in the milk you had to this morning’s

porridge, though I denied ’it when you asked me, for why should all the cream go every day to that lazy widow that had a cow of her own and lost it through her own carelessness? And I put three eggs of our own to old Mary’s score when she came with them yesterday, so that you might think her more generous than she is by nature, poor body! And that is not all—oh, I could take a week to tell what sins I commit in an afternoon—I was nearly crying with envy when I read to you from Lily’s letter yesterday her account of her new gown. And—let me see—here is a dreadful sin before your very nose,—I have eaten the last of the scones, and I meant it for you.”

“*Ego absolvo te!*” said Father Ludovick, stretching across their little breakfast-table to put a hand on her head. “Sin no more, child, in the matter of the cream; I am not old enough yet for fattening. And when did this new vanity for gowns take hold of you? I never knew a woman who had less of it before.”

A shrewder eye would have seen something suspicious in the start she gave at this; but Ludovick, deeply learned in many things less important, did not know the world, and was utterly deceived when she ran round the table with a flutter and put her hands on his shoulders, with “Oh! I could shake a brother so stupid to say such things. No vanity for gowns indeed!—that would be a pretty failing in one that desires above all to be in most

things like the rest of her sex. I will never be ashamed of my fancy for fine clothes, and I cannot be so very like our mother after all, Ludovick, if you did not long ago discover that, for, as I remember the dear, she never looked so much like an angel as when she was trying on a new gown, and I'm ready to hate you, just, for not knowing that I have had two since Christmas, just to please the eye of a man who might as well have been stone-blind for all he seems to have seen of them."

"I did not know, upon my word I did not know!" cried Ludovick, laughing, leaning back to seize her by the hands, and looking up into her face. "Now, how was I to know that you considered the priest in your toilet?"

"Whom else should I consider, poor man? Whom else is there in Uist with eyes for these things?"

"I don't know. There's Corodale, now: I'm sure he has a taste in such matters," said he in all innocence, whereupon she screamed that he hurt her hands, released them suddenly, and proceeded noisily to clear the table.

He sat watching her through eyes half-shut, seeing her head dark against the window. Beyond was the Atlantic, its waves white-crested, and a curve of it lapping a horn of the bay, where women and men were gathering wrack, up to their waists in the brine, forking the weed in heaps and bearing it off in creels. His thought went out of the room

and wandered there; his mind busied itself upon these industries of the isles, and he was startled when he heard Anna sigh.

"Why, Anna, what is wrong?" he asked her, rising hurriedly to his feet, seeing now for the first time perturbation in her manner.

"Nothing at all," she answered, then gave way and burst in tears. "O Ludovick! I wish—I wish we had our mother!" she cried in a frenzy of sobbing.

He went to her and put his hand upon her head, caressing her hair. "Yes, yes," he said; "I know, I know. I have often wished she had been spared, for you must be lonely. This place is solitary for you. There is no one but myself—so much from home in mind if so little in body—so ill-equipped to understand. Are you unhappy, Anna?"

She threw her arms about his shoulders, her head in his breast, broken for the first time since she was a child and came to her mother's lap with childish griefs. "O Ludovick! I am unhappy—no, no, I am very happy; and—and my heart will break," she sobbed, and then, to his astonishment, he saw her smiling through her tears. He set her down in a chair.

"On my soul!" said he in Gaelic, quite perplexed, "you act like a girl in love by all I ever read of it."

She dashed the tears from her eyes, rose, red with shame and storm in her bosom, proceeding again to her duties, while he stood by bewildered at such hysterics in their calm

dwelling. "Yes; just like a girl in love," he repeated.

"You must always be at your nonsense, Ludovick," she said. "As if—as if it were a thing you knew anything about."

"I was no MacNeil if I did not know the effects of it."

"And what are they?" she asked, not for information really, but that she might gain time to recover herself.

He turned and looked out at the window to see the ocean—the masterful, the unalterable, the bitter, the terrible—roll from heaven's edge into Boisdale Bay, where men and women toiled and children plashed in the spray, his dear parishioners.

"Love," said he; "it is a thing so honey-sweet it must be sometimes salted with our tears; the age of true gold returning. God! it is His very name; there is not a pleasure under heaven that is finer than the pain of it. It is seeing the world at its best—hearing for the first time the music of the stars, and comprehending the blackbird's song. The stars and the birds are my brothers then, and the littlest flower beside the way has sudden life. A day given up to it is recompense for a lifetime of griefs; it makes the beggar equal with the king. Uist of the sheldrakes, Uist of the storms—she may be bare, she may be bleak, but she becomes a garden when love lifts up the curtain of the eyes."

Anna was silent for a little. He still looked out at the window, his face elated.

"How do you know?" she asked.

"Because I have it here," he answered quickly, with his hand on his heart. "I am so full of the very potion of it I must walk through Uist and the world with caution, for fear I jolt some over the brimming edge. How do I know? By God! it is my happy torment, for it makes me dread that it may be heaven itself, and that I, Father Ludovick, the Boisdale priest, must pass the open gate."

She came to stand by his side at the window and put her arm through his, and with him look out into the bay.

"What do *you* think it is?" he asked her.

"It is a distraction," she said quickly, least she should lose the courage to express what welled in her. "It is lying awake at night for fear that one should sleep and find that the waking had been dream and the sleep was the reality. It is more soent on the heather, more blue in the sea, longer days of fine weather. Before it, you think the happy times were the times of childhood, when all the folk you know were young and careless like yourself; when love comes then you know that the young days had something wanting because they had no fear. Fear—that is what gives love its piercing."

He wondered, but he did not look down, for he felt her trembling. He had spoken from his brain, she from her bosom: his was the abstract passion of the priest, whose love

compassed the living universe, and had no central object; hers was the voice of personal experience. How blind he had been not to know it sooner!

"You rogue!" he said softly in a little, "and I was blaming you for piety. Is—is it the welcome wind that blows from the north-east?"

"It is," said Anna.

"From Corodale?"

"From Corodale."

"Col?"

She shook herself free in vexation. "O Ludovick!" she cried, on earth again, "how in all the world could you think so?"

"Well, he has known you longest."

"But Dun—but his brother has known me all my life; he showed me that in an afternoon."

Father Ludovick looked at her perplexed. "It is strange," said he. "With Col you were all gaiety, with Duncan you have been so silent and cold,

I sometimes feared he might consider himself unwelcome."

Anna laughed. "That would have made any other than yourself suspicious, Ludovick," she said. "And I think—I think—though I am sorry—we shall after this see less of Col. He has been here but twice since his brother came; but he was not so blind as my loving brother, and he saw, I feel sure, what wind blew welcome to Boisdale presbytery."

Her brother took her hands in his and smiled on her. "I am pleased with your preference," he said. "I am as happy as yourself, for I have long been grieving that I was the means of taking him from the Church, and now I rejoice that I can make amends and give him to love and my little sister."

Anna put her arms about her brother's neck, drew down his head and kissed him, all rosy with her shyness and her joy, then ran from his presence.

CHAPTER XVII.—LOVERS' MOONS.

He might have been blind, this brother going about for ever in his raptures; but Uist, that always liked a lover, was watching with open eyes. Duncan never came trudging over the miles of gull and grass and sand that lay between Corodale and the rock of Our Lady, but every township on the way knew of it. Anna never went shyly walking along the dunes of the machar but some sea-bird rose crying before

her, so that men and women busy with the wrack turned to look and smile and speculate. Brave for many things, but bad for courting, Uist, so flat and frank, hiding nothing on its surface any more than the sea does. You might walk for a day on that peering open isle and never come upon a nook where you might kiss the willingest so long as it was daylight. That, perhaps, was the reason for Ludovick's blind-

ness. When he saw his sister and Duncan together it was always at a distance most discreet,—an arm's-length from each other. He was not close enough to see their eyes or hear their words, and that made all the difference.

Of course there were the little dells close on the wider bay, where it was possible to sit upon the sand, and love as the bird loves, unnoticed. But only Anna knew that, and Anna did not tell, for to be seen on any day but a festival coming from these sandy hollows was to Uist women the unfailing sign that weddings were at hand. But there was the little *Ron*, the fairy boat. No hesitation need be about the pair of them sailing out to Tir-an-oig, for no one knew but themselves that Tir-an-oig was there, and often Duncan, in that cheerful spring, would take the tiller, and she snug up beside him, glad in his arm, desirable exceedingly, her voice in his bosom. The *Ron*,—the Seal, unfitting name for this good boat, this galley of joy! it should have been the *Eala Bhan*—the wild white swan, proud strong bird of the Islands, and beautiful and free,—the *Ron* swam in these days round the coast and into lonely creeks, where only, from the cliffs, the fulmar's cry was to be heard, its wedding-song. Long and far would they glide silent through the waters into shallows where brown burns from the bog-lands stained the froth of tides incoming, and birds twittered among the shelisters and sedges, and little fish

plowted in the pools, and the spout-fish thrust from the sand, parched with the sun, but seemingly finding the heat delightful. Silent, the two of them, like as it were a swoond they sailed in, and she could hear his heart beating at her ear.

Uist, garnering wrack, up to the arms in the cold salt weeds of the sea, used to stand shading its eyes with a dripping hand and look at them holidaying in this busy world : the old would sigh for something, the young would envy.

Or it would be in the nights of moon, the Islands floating in golden fire, Hecla and Benmore abrupt and clear against the east, every rock that jutted from the Sound jet-black. Drifting then at the will of the gentle wind, they saw dim Barra lit with kelp-fires; the scent of bracken and peat came from the shores they skirted; in townships close upon the beach they could hear the bleat of lambs and sometimes the sound of a pipe lamenting, but sweet, oh! sweet beyond words, in its very sorrow. They were out of the world as if they tenanted the remotest star. How often in these evenings must a man have come out before his prayers and stood to yawn, his hands in his pockets, a very clod in the moonlight, and in the sound of the small shy waves of the ebb tide, and wonder to see that tiny boat drift across the gold, and guess in a little 'twas Herself and him of Corodale, and feel an influence that if he had been bard would have found itself in song. He would go back, be

certain, to his low door, and call his women out to share the spectacle. "*Oh m'eudail!*" would the women say, wooing her with their words, out yonder on the gold, glad to see this. How great a joy in the Hebrides is night and a moonlit sea and a boat coming home across it! Who that remembers, and sees the black sail blown across the highway of the moon but does not, even into age, feel vague ardours, pleasant profound unrests?

Yes; Uist saw. But Uist said nothing, only "God between her and harm," as says the Gael in all lands though sea-divided, and went round-about roads on its business, so that it might not meet her and her lover and put her to the pain of blushing in his presence. But when the women had her to themselves alone in their cabins, then they teased her—oh, they teased her!

"We are busy at present, oh yes! but busy or not we must be turning to the spinning speedily, for there is many a cupboard and kist and napery-press in Corodale." So would they say slyly, bending over their husband's nets, plying the wooden needle. Or, "Hens will have to be at the fattening soon here, good lady; was ever a Boisdale wedding without its hundred hens?" Or warn her—as if in ignorance—of marriage as a pact too easy made and ill to unmake, like the flounder's wry-mouth, that came to him in one tide for his mockery of his neighbours, and has stayed with him a thousand years.

A month ago Anna would have been their equal with retort, but now her art was gone: she so poorly replied to them, and laughed so helplessly, they tired of their new diversion, and started in earnest to the fattening of their hens.

And then all of a sudden the air of Boisdale was poisoned by a doubt set round in whispers, in half-sentences, and shaking of heads at *ceilidh* fires, before kelp-furnaces, and in waulking-sheds, where women gossip between the choruses as they full the home-spun cloth. How the doubt arose no one could say: it came up like a north-west storm out of the most placid weather, and the overcome of it (as they say) was "MacNeil's Treasure." It was recalled that the Corodales were always keen for money. Old Corodale, the father of Col, had in his time been the only man in Uist unprincipled enough to search for Dermosary's secret, and to spend a whole winter trailing among the rocks, dragging lochans, and digging holes in search of the *ulaidh* which he had died without lighting on, though what he would have done with it had he got it was plain from the folly with which he scattered in hair-brained schemes another fortune that had come to him from a relative in the Lowlands. Like father like son, said the doubters, even with a stepson, and Duncan's interest in Herself began to look less pleasant in the eyes of Boisdale. Anna, with a mind less wrapped in her own affairs, might have

noticed a sudden change in the manners of the women who at first had bantered her about wedding napery and wedding fowls. They dared not hurt her feelings by expressing what was in their minds, but they were silent in her company when her mood was the most joyous; and instead of feeling pleasure when Corodale was in the neighbourhood, they stayed indoors and scowled.

She went one evening to a house where a woman was bathing her child in sea-water warmed; went down on her knees beside the tub and doted on the rosy body, her throat full of gloating little murmurs, touched the velvet skin, and could have smothered it in kisses. Every sign of ecstasy added to the mother's annoyance with an innocent man in Corodale. They have a bathing hymn in Uist that the woman crooned as she put her palms full of water on the child:—

"A palmful for the age of thee,
And the neck of thee like milk;
Spoils for thee and love for thee,
And the green gowns of silk."

There are many verses in the bathing hymn, the last an allusion to treasure and gifts, and as she was singing it, the mother let a fast glance fall on Anna at her knees, laughing back to the laughter of the child. "No, no treasure," she added, stopping her hymn; "better wert thou, my darling, wanting it and going about the world with the face of thee for all thy fortune."

"Faith! a little money would do no harm at all," said Anna,

without thinking the remark had any application to herself. "We must be letting the little Morag have a tocher," and dipped her hand in the water, and poured a palmful on the baby's bosom, laughing. "That's for treasure, sweet," said she, "and that for the contented mind," as she added another palmful.

"Your own treasure is your worst fortune," said the woman, and Anna's countenance fell. She had forgotten all about her reputation as an heiress to old Dermosary's secret.

"My fortune, *oh righ!* is just my face and a chest with two large drawers at the bottom of it."

"A pity, indeed, it was no more," said the woman, hurriedly drying her child, and Anna went away wondering what lay behind the words. She had not long to wait for an explanation, for she met next day the one man in all that part of Uist that had been at the start of the change of feeling in her neighbourhood. It was Dark John. He met her coming radiant from her prayers upon the rock, for prayer had taken a new meaning for Anna now that she had sampled the delights of Paradise. So much she brimmed over with content, she was in the mood to take even Dark John to her finest graces. When she hailed him with her usual cheerful affectation of the manly one, the equal, he was touched for but a little with remorse, but then remembered Col his master. "The knife—here is the bosom; the fire, here is the hand," he said

to himself, recalling his words on St Michael's night.

"Oh, love of the domain and of the universe!" said he, in that lofty manner not uncommon with the simplest people of the Isles; "why, king of the moon and of the sun, are you not for marrying, and you so beautiful?"

Anna laughed. "Oh, thou love among men!" said she, in his own manner, "how can I marry, and bachelors so numerous and alluring? I am in the state of Peter-of-the-Foxes, so many partners are to my mind that I am beat to choose one."

"It is unkind, good lady, on all of them," said John, chewing a shred of the dulse that he always carried with him. It brought the briny taste of the deadly deep to his palate.

"Perhaps," said Anna. "Still they seem wonderfully thriving for fellows with broken hearts. 'Tis one result, maybe, of a bad example; you are the last, yourself, just man! to blame any one for leisure in coming to the altar."

"I had no attractions, on my soul!" said John, a thing so manifest on the face of it that one less considerate would have laughed. "I was notable in my time for the one thing, and that was just the dancing; oh yes, I had the name, in many parts, of a powerful, strong dancer. But otherwise, at his best, there was nothing curious about Dark John to please the ladies. Just a plain man, with a knowledge of boats and fishing, and the rearing of small cattle, and no time for trifling.

And consider, *oh righ!* the risks that are in taking to house another man's daughter. She may be beauteous as the bird, as timid as the mullet of the sea, till the spinsters strip her for her bedding (if I dare to mention it), and turn out in the morning a manager. No, faith! I know who's in my house when it's myself alone is there, but I might never be sure of it if I had a wife. A plain man—that's all of it, lady; a plain man, and plenty to do with himself. I had never the art for the ladies."

"O John! let me tell you it is simple enough for any man who has baited hooks for the long lines."

"That is the worst of the baited hook; you never can tell what it will catch—biorach or turbot, or the devil-fish himself. I knew a fellow once who married a most plausible person, and he was hardly over the chapel door when he learned that she was plain-soled, so that water would not run under her feet—the most unlucky person a man could take for partner."

"He should have given her high heels for her plain soles, and it might have happened that she had a soft hand for a sick-bed."

"By the luck of things she went and died on him before he had a chance to learn whether her hands were hard or soft."

"Then he might have counted her flat foot not so unlucky after all, if it ridded him of a woman that was unsuitable."

"The poor man got the

wrong wife anyway," said Dark John, turning the dulse in his cheek.

"Perhaps it was the other way about, as I've sometimes seen it happen, and it was the poor woman got the wrong man. We are but simple creatures at the best, Dark John."

"So they tell me; so they tell me! I am but a plain man, and have had no experience; a busy man all my days, and without a scrap of learning. Foolish the women, indeed, as they tell me."

"It must have been a married man let you into the secret," said Anna, still in the key for the old rogue's humour. "A man unmarried would never suspect it, for we are too cunning to let it be found out too soon."

John grew weary of this banter, that brought him no nearer his object. He saw her brother in the distance, and feared he might come up before anything was accomplished, drew in his breath again upon the dulse, and got the flavour of the floor of Barra Sound, remembering all he owed to Col of Corodale. He edged a little nearer Anna, with his eyes like beads in the furrows of his face, every furrow full of cunning.

"They're talking about the hens for a wedding," said he.

"Just so!" said Anna, cold and proud on the moment. "The geese must aye be cackling about their neighbours."

"I'm a plain man, and it is myself, perhaps, who should not be so bold as to mention

it," said the man, drawing in his lantern cheeks.

"Indeed I do not differ," said Anna, moving to quit a conversation that pity for a wretch lonely more than any other creature in the Isles had made her carry on longer than was wise. "I would leave the cackling to the geese: 'tis unbecoming in a man to hawk the clash of women in waulking-sheds about the country-side." He was not to be beaten, and kept for a little by her side as she moved towards the presbytery,—her chin in the air, her eyes cold, and her shawl drawn tight to bursting about her shoulders, a sign in that cordial weather that storms were in below it, but no sign at all to Dark John.

"On my back be Conan's curse, lady," said he, "if I did not tell them it was but women's chattering. I would be on my knees to beg your pardon for mentioning it otherwise. 'Neither the one nor the other in Corodale,' said I, 'would soil a hand with her fortune.'"

The blow struck to her inner heart. The pleasant land, the glowing sea, grew dim, and her limbs shook under her. She stopped a moment, commanded her countenance by a miracle of effort, and looked at the wretch who was her torment. He chewed his dulse, felt the flavour of the deeps, and wondered what she thought; but that he could not have discovered from her face if he had had a million eyes.

"Good man, John!" said she; "you may mean well, but you have a fool's tongue." Then

left him hurriedly, where he stood chewing dulse and scratching his neck.

Her brother had gone into the house; she passed the gable without entering, making for the township. They say that nature does not heed poor man's anxieties, and will not cloud nor weep with him when he is hurt nor smile when he is glad. Never a heart broke in the Highlands or the Islands but a mountain frowned; Uist

sorrowed for her daughter stricken. A mist gathered over Hecla, a rain began to fall weepingly on her shoulders. She heard the bleat of lambs in Salachry—Christ! the little lambs!—His very emblems, and born to delight so brief and the inevitable knife. She saw her dear native place mean and dark, the people in the field, whom she now avoided for the first time in her life, bent with toil.

CHAPTER XVIII.—THE BLOW.

Her first thought had been to fly to Ludovick, but what could she tell him beyond that an old rogue babbled? Then she reflected that the first of her apprehensions did not rise to-day, but sprang from some words of the woman who refused to bathe her child for fortune. She was hurt there first; she would go there for healing, if healing could be had: and once a little apart from Dark John, she quickened her step until she came to the cluster of dwellings they called Ballavon, in such a hurry and in such an inward turmoil she saw none of the queer sights that always gave her interest when she came to it in ordinary good spirits. It was built in a ring—this Ballavon—every door of it affably open to the doors across the way; the grass in the middle of it given over to stirks and hens and ducks and children. The rain was already gathering in little pools, where the ducks waddled in content and the bairns plashed;

the hens stood under the broad eaves of rannoch or bent grass, chuck-chucking, laughably like old women in drab gowns and red caps sheltering from a sudden shower on the way to Mass. And in every doorway there was a wheel humming, or a barrel of nets repairing, or a creel of hose at the darning, with the spinners and the darners briskly carrying on a conversation across the open space, where their youngsters paddled with the ducks, and the yearling cattle lowed and nibbled the scanty grass. Could the princesses of the world have a more useful or more cheerful convocation? A month or less ago the children would have run laughing to Anna, and the women would have checked their wheels or put down the needles at once, and made some excuse for attracting her attention, but now Herself, that used to bring the ease of mind, the mood of idleness, brought unrest. The women kept their eyes on their wheel-hecks, mak-

ing their feet go faster on the treadles till the hum arose of bees in heather ; the hose demanded closer attention. As for the children, they stood open-mouthed or smiling awkwardly, ankle-deep in the puddles, so enraptured with the welcome rain after weeks of sunshine, they let her pass without interruption. When she had dashed into the house of healing, as she hoped it was to be, all the wheels and needles stopped as if at a command. The women looked across the common at each other ; nothing was said, but all Ballavon, saving only the bairns and the hens and the stirks and the quacking ducks, had one idea—Miss Anna was in some distress ! Who can bear to see a neighbour in trouble that cannot be relieved ?—not the soft-hearted folks of Uist ! Ballavon abandoned the doorways and went into the dim hearth-side with its work, and wished it were last summer and Herself the cause of no vexation.

"I have come to put but the one question to you !" was the first words Anna said when she entered the house, to meet a very startled woman singing the song of "*Crodh Chailein*" over her baby.

"Wait till I put this one to bed," said the mother, bending over the cradle to gain time to think what her answer should be to a question that she could guess the nature of before it was uttered.

"When I was here on Wednesday," said Anna, when her chance came, standing on the floor, refusing the seat offered,

her limbs trembling, her mouth parched, "you said my fortune was my worst possession."

The woman had made up her mind to lie. "Did I ? faith !" said she. "If I did, I must have been wandering. I cannot guess what would put that into my head, for unlucky indeed would the fortune be that yourself would not adorn."

The house was dim in the sudden falling of the afternoon ; but she could see that some tumult was in the girl's bosom, her face unusual solemn, and her eyes distressed.

"I did not ask you at the time what you meant when you said it, for I thought it might have more than one meaning, and be no more than a fancy of your own."

"Indeed, darling, and what more could it be ?" said the woman, glad to borrow the notion. "Just a foolish fancy of my own ! You could not ask any one in Ballavon but they will tell you I have the name for talking nonsense."

Anna was not for a second deceived, and it was the agony of the woman that she saw this. The girl stood on the floor in silence, not as if she wished any more to listen to the other, but as if she strained to hear sounds far off ; her eyes absent, a most pitiful stillness come to her body. She saw in the woman's evasion a confirmation of her dread ; she was the object of pity to all Uist, because the fools thought her reputed fortune was her attraction ! She could stand their pity,—but that Duncan should be thought so foul !

'Twas that overwhelmed her; to blame but the wind that Duncan! The man who had brought her all the riches of the world, who laughed at the vulgar ambitions of common men! It was unlikely that he had ever heard her inheritance mentioned. It had been a vexation to her before; now she grew red with shame to be associated with it in any way, and with the old man of Dermosary who had made her the victim of his unhallowed bequest she felt a grievance. It extended for a little to her brother, that, in his odd caprice, would neither make use of the treasure nor get rid of it. How gladly to-night she could throw it into the deeps of Barra Sound, if all Uist could be present to see her doing so. But as things were, how helpless was the situation! Tears came to her eyes and trembled on her cheek, she surrendered to one sob that brought the woman lamenting motherly, seizing her by the arms, herself in tears. "I could take my tongue from the roots," said she, "for saying a word about it."

"Oh! you need not vex yourself for that," cried Anna; "what you said, of itself, would have troubled me little, but I have heard the same thing elsewhere, and now I know it is the common talk of Uist."

"I would not be heeding it, if I were you, my dear; sure Uist was ever fond of gabbling!"

"The pity is that Uist should have the excuse! but that is no fault of mine. I am hurt, I am hurt, good woman, and none

brought a prince to Scotland to sow trouble. Some of it grew at once and fell before the hook, and there was an end of it; but what was sown in the sods in Arkaig is now coming up in Uist for the pain of those who never had anything to do with it. I am going home now. There is no more to be said. I am going home. Good woman, how it rains! How is the baby's chicken-pox?"

She went out of Ballavon, for the first time in her life, without seeing a soul at its doors, for all the women, so averse from grief, were busying themselves inside, and now she knew the reason. She was glad herself they were invisible, for she would never have been able to present a front of unconcern to them. Besides, she wanted no distractions just at present, for she was nursing a hope that had been born when she stood on the floor of the house she had just left. There was one way out of this horrible affair: calumny could be still diverted from the man of her adoration. Very simply, too; Ludovick had the remedy in his hands. She had but to get his consent to the dispersion of this wretched money, and his assistance: once he knew the grief it caused her, he would no longer take up his old position. One thing was plain (she could admit it herself now)—the curse he had spoken of was certainly in it, and she would not finger a single coin. Of course Ludovick would easily settle her difficulty. She knew how

much he, too, loved Duncan ; how horrified he would be to learn that Uist thought Duncan capable of alloying his affection for her with a thought of that vile trash tarnished by intrigue, and known in history as a relic of defeat and degradation and ideals long abandoned. She grew almost glad as she hurried home to the presbytery, and it was without a single doubt in her mind that all would be well in a moment or two. She came in upon her brother, where he read from the Venerable Bede.

"I had almost gone to look for you, Anna," he said, laying down his book and looking up at her with a smile of relief. "Surely you were not out in the rain all this time: I cannot think Dark John's conversation so fascinating as all that."

"I—I took shelter in Ballavon," she said, and dropped in a chair.

He saw something disturbed her. "What's the matter, Anna?" he asked anxiously.

"O Ludovick!" she cried, "I want you to do something for my peace of mind. I promised I would never mention Uncle's bequest any more, if I lived to the age of a hundred; but then I did not—I did not know Duncan."

The priest's face clouded. Surely he could not have misread the character of young Corodale.

"You must not be angry with me, Ludovick; but if you will, you must just be so. I cannot help it, for I must speak. This money must be given away."

"It can't," said Father Ludovick.

"Listen, Ludovick, dear," said his sister, warm and eager, sure she had only to show him how unhappy she was to have him consent to anything. "Listen, I refuse to have the name any longer of owning this wretched Loch Arkaig *ulaidh*. Let us give it to the Church——"

"I have said before I would not if I could; the Church has lost already, and direfully, in souls by it. It is cursed."

"To the poor, then!" said Anna eagerly.

"What! and convey the curse to them, Anna? No, my dear. If you were our mother from heaven that asked it, I would still say no; it cannot be. I could tell you in four words why, but for two or three reasons that do not affect us, and particularly because it was once a secret of the Confessional. Why do you bring this up again, Anna, when it was understood between us we should mention it no more? Let the stuff lie wherever it may be; all the evil it may do accomplished——"

"It is like to do more evil under a rock in Mingulay than ever it did above ground," said Anna. "It has already brought the name of Duncan into disrepute."

The priest started. "What!" said he.

"They are saying—the very folk that I have always thought my friends; he—— Oh! I cannot tell you, Ludovick," she cried, and her tears began to fall.

He paced the room nervously, waiting her composure, hard at

meditation, his guess far distant from the actual nature of her grief.

"What *could* they blame *him* for?" at last he asked, stopping and facing her. "*His* innocence, *his* honour, are beyond question. For why should he be blamed because—because he comes from Corodale? He has paid enough for that already. And how came out the story? I thought the Mingulay rock could have kept a secret just as well as any priest."

Anna sat stony, bravely restraining her tears, now certain hope was gone, and little heeding her brother's surprise.

"Come!" he said again, "tell me what you have heard, Anna."

"You know very well," she said.

"I have a notion," he confessed; "but in what form did it come to you?"

"The form it came in matters very little," said she, "for the lie is on the winds. I see it in every face, that Duncan is thought to have as much interest in Arkaig's *ulaidh* as in myself."

"What!" cried Ludovick, much amazed. "Is that what he gets blamed for, that he courts you for your fortune?"

"Could he be blamed for worse? My dear Ludovick, I told you long ago that something like this would be the consequence of my reputation. There's not a soul in Boisdale to-day but thinks my Duncan mercenary."

Father Ludovick did a strange thing—he sat him in a chair and laughed. The

presbytery rang with his laughter—his that usually never got beyond the grave, gruff undertone of merriment. He held his sides, his eyes streamed with tears of frantic entertainment. Anna was amazed and indignant.

"I am sorry to look stupid," she said; "but if you took me into your confidence I might laugh too. Till you tell me where the humour lies I cannot see it for myself."

"Faith! Anna, I'm certain of that," said her brother, more restrained. "You must excuse my want of feeling; but this revelation of yours is not exactly the one I had reason to expect from the distress you showed."

"It seems as serious to me as it well could be," said Anna, incapable of understanding why Ludovick, usually so sympathetic, should be for once so inconsiderate. Then she fancied she saw the reason—he thought such a charge against her lover merely laughable. "I know it is ridiculous," she said; "but remember that our neighbours do not know Duncan so well as we do."

"Then let them learn," said Father Ludovick, growing grave. He came over beside her. "Come, Anna," he said; "do not distress yourself over a piece of folly."

"It seemed to me it would be so easy for you to make everything clear and pleasant if you wished it, and I never thought you would refuse," she said, now dry-eyed.

"It would, if it could be, but it cannot, more's the pity; and

there's an end to it. I thought you were in love. What sort of love is it that lets the opinion of the world, regarding its object, dull for a moment its own delight?"

"I will love him all the better for the injustice done to him by the thought; it is not because I know that I am vexed, it is because I fear he himself may some day know. His spirit would never brook it."

"What! is his love so delicate, too, it could not suffer the suspicion of fools?"

"Ah! you do not under-

stand," said Anna. "He would suffer for me—that Uist should think I took second place to my fortune would hurt him more than that he should himself be thought a traitor."

"I did not think of that," said Ludovick.

"No, for you were never in love, my dear," said Anna. "And you cannot help me?"

He showed a visage distressed exceedingly. "My dear, my dear, I cannot," he said; "that is more assured than ever, but time may do what the Boisdale priest cannot."

CHAPTER XIX.—THE GREAT CAROUSE.

A few days after this there happened what was long remembered in Uist as the Great Carouse. Once upon a time carouse had been common enough on the island,—a fever that swept among them after lucky seasons, flushing them at the face and making them merry and noisy, and generous to that degree they scattered pence among the very seagulls that quarrelled round the gut-pots. But 'twas a brief fever at the worst, and harmed no one very much, and left behind it a whole winter's telling of foolish spectacles and laughable mad exploits. Father Ludovick put an end to the little carouses. Himself, he had always wine for a friend and a gardevine of spirits for the very sick, and would countenance the passage of a judicious glass on a proper occasion; but on recklessness he came down with a king's hand. Not commanding—he knew

the men of Uist better—but with the influence that came from their regard for his respect. Let the boats come home from the east, every man's pocket bulging with silver, his heart light and free,—no matter the day nor hour, Master Ludovick had some excuse to be in the neighbourhood of the ale-house door. They might be thirsty as old brine-barrels that had gaped for a summer in the sun, but he had no mercy on them. He marched up and down between the drink-house and the quay, hard (as it seemed) at cogitation on his next sermon, but never without the tail of his eye on the door. Four hundred men back from Fife and the money burning in their pockets could thus be thrown past temptation, as it were, at a shrug of the shoulder from the Lord of the Isles. They must be into their own houses before he left his post, and then

he would go home chuckling, and tell Anna, "Praise God, they are with their wives and mothers, and now will be picking of pockets."

But the Great Carouse happened at a time when Uist had no money in its pockets and Father Ludovick was away at a funeral Mass in Eriskay. His being there, indeed, had something to do with the planning of the carouse. Planned it was beyond a question. Col of Corodale, sitting very close to his own affairs and rarely venturing abroad, heard his brother one day let drop that he meant to go over to Boisdale on the day after the morrow. The news left him envious and angry, but he could do nothing, for he was still on a footing of open brotherliness — though that same somewhat cold and selfish — with Duncan. But a remark of the person that Duncan spoke to, that Father Ludovick was to celebrate a Mass on the day that Duncan meant for his trip to Boisdale, suddenly sent a plan into his head. He sat late that night and laboured with the Gaelic muse until he had fashioned some verses of a ribald song to the air of "The Little Black Pot"; made an excuse the next day to visit Benbecula, and rode to the inn at Creggans, where he had a long sederunt with the Sergeant, who found an escapade to the fancy of Jib-boom.

The day of Duncan's visit to Boisdale was moist and warm, with a fog so thick on the sea there could be no fishing, so at the foot of Our Lady Star the

boats lay hull to hull in a long row, lazily rocking in the swell of the bay, where the guillemot and the diver boldly ventured in beside them. The men sat on the thwarts or lay on the half-decks, passing the time till evening, with no more thought in their heads of carousal than of Christmas, when suddenly there came down upon them from the open the form of a ship. For a moment she was vague and great—a phantom—then she was the *Happy Return*, the smuggler, her name white on her bows. She swept past them with a froth at her counter; the fishermen started to their feet astonished, expecting to see her thrown on the shore; but this was the hour of display for Jib-boom: he scraped the very edge of safety, turned on his heel, and came to his pick of an anchorage at the end of the row of skiffs. His sails came down as if the halyards had been cut; the anchor roared.

"By the Book! and I'm the finest sailor in the Islands," said Jib-boom, and looked to his men for the admiration he counted no more than his due.

"I'm not bad myself," said one of the Macleods of Skye, and drew his cuff across his nose.

"You!" cried the skipper. "By the grace of God I was sailing ships when you were supping brose out of a horn spoon with a whistle on the other end of it."

"Like enough, like enough; we were aye the lads for music in Isle of Skye," said the Skianach; "and perhaps yourself was

content to take it with your fingers."

The skipper aimed a blow at him in good-humour, then caught a stay, and stood upon the bulwark to glance over the long parade of skiffs. "It could not have happened better," he said to himself with satisfaction. "If I give them a glass I'm sure of a hearty chorus."

The fishermen looked with admiration: they make much in the Hebrides of a man who can handle a ship with skill. "Good for yourself, skipper!" cried the nearest, and clapped their hands. "'Tis you are the boy can do it! Did we not think you were making yonder for Master Ludovick's garden and planting of kale; but you put her about when your keel was crumbling the cockle-shells!"

Jib-boom kept a calm face, but felt warm and satisfied within him.

"Too thick for the banks, lads?" said he.

"Too thick altogether, just man!"

"That's fisherman's luck for you, O lads! Glad am I that I was bred to the big boats and not to the blowing of wind in net-bows, and shelling of mussels, and that I trade with fish that follow the scent of their noses."

The fishermen laughed. "True for you, skipper! true for you! But we're here, and we're not complaining so long as we have our health." And indeed they looked contented enough—the rogues!—to lie on their backs on the thwarts and

take advantage of the idleness that Providence sent them.

Aft in the *Happy Return* the man without the Gaelic started to make ready a meal. "To the devil with your skellit!" cried Jib-boom. "Have up a jar of Barra, and let us keep the fog from our inwards."

The jar came up like magic. Jib-boom took a wooden *cuach* from his breast and drew the full of it of spirits, which he threw in the sea for luck; then helped himself less generously again. "Here's to the little black pot that reeks so sly in the burns of Barra!" he cried—a smuggler's toast; and his men were not long in following his example. The jar gurgled at the neck most pleasantly; briskly about went the cup! In the solemn bay of Boisdale there was at once a jovial spot. For a while the sloop had all the cheer to herself, the skiffs but dumb spectators; but Jib-boom at last belled across the bay, "Gather round, lads! gather round, here's a letter from home!" The fishermen laughed, thinking the invitation was not serious, but soon he made them see he meant it. Round came the skiffs, till they hung on the side of the *Happy Return* like a bee-swarm on a branch. An old Nantes keg came rolling from the chains where it stood marvellously ready. The bung came out with a "tloop!" and the stuff they make in the black pots of Mingulay and Barra was splashing in a hundred vessels. It swept like a spindrift over the skiffs, gaiety

with it. Jib-boom was the king of a jovial corps.

"*Squab as e!*—drink it out, friends!" he roared; "I'll warrant there's plenty more where that came from; sure the barley's in braird in Barra already. Pass her round fast, boys—Lord, I'm in the key! Pass her round, I'm telling you; she's the genuine."

"I declare I do not feel the least taste of Parliament off the good stuff," said an old fellow, with his nose in the can and his eyes twinkling.

"I'll warrant you not; Geordie nor his gaugers had a finger-nail on that keg. Pass her round, lads! Hearty, hearty! so long as I'm in the key. Pass her round; to-day for fun, to-morrow for repentance. Make her go with a splash, and to the Worst with all your shirkers."

He stood on the deck of the sloop, high above the other vessels, his shaven face filled with devilment, his eyes dancing, his long black curls blowing across his mouth, and his earrings making him look like a foreigner—there was no refusing to keep abreast with the humour of such a gallant fellow.

Once or twice the haze rose on a gust of easterly wind, and showed the island sombre and cold in a drizzle of rain; the chapel gaunt and hard over all, the houses of the townships very small and dull; then fell again more close than ever about the boats, shutting them off completely from the world of sober duties. The

spindrift of folly, of the Barra barley-fields, went over and over them; the youngest felt that now he had found himself, that now he might be brave, that he had only to open his mouth and speak the finest wisdom, and that he could command the circling of the stars; the oldest felt just on the verge of some magnificent discovery. Just on the verge, just on the verge—another glass would do it. All grew noisy, breaking into gusts of laughter or loudly arguing. They began to spang from boat to boat, and brag and challenge.

"I am thinking it is time for my little bit song," said the skipper to himself, and started "The Little Black Pot":—

"Fisherman, fisherman, what is your fortune?

Empty nets and a mail to pay.
To the Worst with sorrow, and God
bless Barra,
For her small black pot will make
you gay.

Seoladair, seoladair, what is your ruing?

A rotten ship and a foul land-fall.
That was to-day, to-night be drinking
From the small black pot, and forget
it all."

He stood with his back to the mast, and sang with a rollicking voice that would tempt the soberest on the high-ways of folly.

"Man! am I not the singer whatever?" he would say, taking breath while the others chorused, and glance at his crew for admiration.

"No doubt, no doubt; but here's a poor fellow from Isle of Skye that's doing his best,

and would like a little of the credit," said one of the Macleods. "God! I wish I knew the words, and I would be showing you!"

"Stop you till I'm done with this song and I'll give you my hand on the half-head," said the skipper, and proceeded with his ditty. He looked as drunk as his company, but spilt more from his *cuach* than he drank, and always kept an anxious eye around to see that the stuff was flowing freely. "It's time for the Sergeant's verses now," said he to himself, and started a verse they had never heard before:—

"Duncan, Duncan, what is your wishing?"

A crock of gold and an easy life.
Come over from Corodale, then, and welcome,
To make the crock of gold your wife."

"*A rìsd! a rìsd!*—again! again!"—cried the fishermen, laughing, and Jib-boom sang it again and again, and two or three more verses of its kind that he had learned himself no later than that morning from the lips of the Creggans inn-keeper. In ten minutes the words were common property, and the new verses were counted better than the old.

"Duncan, Duncan, what is your wishing?"

A crock of gold and an easy life."

They bawled it over and over again, till a diversion came in the outbreak of a fight between the Macleods and the crew of a skiff beside them.

"Give me but the one stroke at him and I will make a popish burial," cried the elder Mac-

leod, and jumped into the skiff, with his brother after him, who cried, "Dunvegan! Dunvegan! Dunvegan never was beat!"

"Children of Satan," said Jib-boom, unaccountably vexed for a man that dearly loved a ploy. "Are they going to spoil me altogether? Come back this instant!" he cried to them, looking down into the skiff; come back, or I'll take to the fists myself, and Isle of Skye will be the sufferer, I assure you." But a Skyeman never came back till his blow was struck.

"The one stroke and I will be content," said the MacNeil who had started the quarrel, and found next moment his enemy stumble over a bundle of lines and into his very arms. They grappled and fell, and the others in the boat got into grips for the sake of company.

"I was never in all my life in a better key for joviality, and here you're vexing me with your arguments," said Jib-boom, shaking his fist. "Come back, Macleods, and I'll give you the best of satisfaction myself."

The Macleods paid no heed, —they were too busy; so Jib-boom caught a stay and swung himself in among them.

"I'm fair affronted," said he. "They'll be putting the blame of this on the stuff we carry from Barra." He caught the elder Macleod by the collar and breech. "Come out a minute till I whisper to you," he cried, and with a heave had him over the side of the skiff and bobbing in the water. "There you are, Callum," said he, "and good you were when you were in

your senses: I have seen the day it was not two cups of Barra would put you out of them." The fighting stopped; everybody laughed at Callum climbing on board the sloop.

The tide was ebbing, the skiffs that were farthest in were already aground, and Jib-boom was the first to see it. "Five o'clock," said he; "time you were on shore, lads, to see if Isle Uist is still to the fore."

"Is the keg empty?" asked one.

"To the dregs," said the skipper, and tilted it over with his foot.

"Well, it is time to be steeping the withies, then," said the fishermen, and stepped from skiff to skiff till they were all ashore, splashed through the fringe of the tide, and got to the grass. They went in noisy

bands. For the first time their women learned there had been folly, and came out to the doors amazed.

"*Och Dhe!* here is the work of Jib-boom and his blackguards," said they. "And Master Ludovick away in Eriskay! There will be cracking of heads before the mouth of evening. Listen to them singing—*och*, indeed there will be cracking of heads!"

"Duncan, Duncan, what is your wishing?"

A crock of gold and an easy life."

There was not a man of them that had not the words of Col's song; it was to be heard on every road.

"There they go!" said Jib-boom, listening from his deck. "Have I not had the diligent scholars?"

(*To be continued.*)

MONTENEGRIN SKETCHES.

THE SHEEP-LIFTERS.

THERE is a feeling of suppressed excitement in the air this evening. It is nine o'clock, and the billiard-room of the Hotel Balsha is unwontedly crowded, to the great inconvenience of the players, a neat young Turk and a grizzled old Montenegrin. The terms "billiard-room" and "hotel" are perhaps misleading, suggesting leather lounges and other appurtenances of civilisation; but beyond the war-worn table, with its patched cloth and springless cushions, and the fact that sleeping accommodation is provided upstairs or in the kitchen, and on shake-downs in the dining-room, according to the number of guests,—none are ever turned away,—there is nothing to justify the use of these names.

The governor of Podgorica is upstairs in his room, closeted with the brigadier and the captain of gendarmes. Messengers are constantly coming and going, and it is significant that they all carry rifles this evening. On the stairs, on the landing above, and in the hall, are at least a score of men standing silently, leaning on their rifles. In vain I attempt to pump Milan, the governor's private secretary, who has just come in and seated himself at our table.

"I know you are hatching up a little war or something," I expostulate, "otherwise old

Captain Tomo of the police would not have declined a glass of wine. He was visibly swollen with importance when he went up to the governor just now."

But Milan only smiles vaguely in answer.

"It is a wet night," he says, and I glance at the rain-washed window. Through the blurred glass is a face, indistinguishable yet familiar, and I look closer. There is a movement as if a finger is beckoning from outside, and with a muttered excuse I leave the room. It is Petar, my friend the gendarme, a merry soul, and the companion of many a midnight escapade in the old Turkish quarter, where he has watched over us when we have serenaded the Turks. He draws me cautiously under the shelter of a doorway, and whispers impressively that I shall get my rifle.

"Cover it under thy mantle," he adds. "Let none guess that thou art armed, and then meet me at the corner."

Hurriedly I edge my way through the waiting men, and in my room I hear the subdued voices of the governor's council through the thin partition.

Buckling on my revolver, and slipping a magazine into the carbine, another in my pocket, covering all in the folds of my greatcoat, I carelessly, though with beating heart,

push through the crowd again out into the stormy night. Petar grins appreciatively as I tap the carbine and thank him for warning me. Glancing hastily around to see that no one is watching us, he takes the path towards the border, and in an instant we are swallowed up in the darkness. The clock chimes the half hour, and a few seconds later the voices of the muezzins from their lofty perches break the stillness of the night with the final call to prayer.

Silently Petar leads the way along the little river Ribnica,—I well content to wait till he shall explain,—his soft *opanki* making no sound on the stone-strewn ground, till he pauses, and, climbing down the steep river-bank, halts under the shelter of a cave. Taking off his broad *struka* he lays it on the ground, and with our backs against the wall we recline at our ease. I give Petar my tobacco-tin and ask for an explanation; but first he deftly rolls two cigarettes, and in the light of the match I see that his face is wreathed in smiles.

"Nizams" (Turkish regulars) "are coming," he says, blowing out the fragrant smoke and chuckling. "They are coming to raid the sheep on Lazzo's farm over yonder."

"How dost thou know?" I ask impatiently. "Have they telegraphed their departure to the governor?"

"Nay," says Petar; "but Achmet the Turk has betrayed them. He has bought the right to return to his home in Podgorica with this information.

Thou knowest he stole rifles not long ago?"

I nod, and ask how *he* knows this.

"Achmet's brother is my friend, Gospodin. And ere the governor knew, I had thought of thee, but dared not speak till now for fear that they would guess that I was telling thee. At midnight they come and cross the river at the ford, and there we shall await them."

"How many come?" I inquire.

"Six, a dozen perhaps, not more," he answers; "but it is not them we fear. The firing may bring the Albanians down to the border, for it is but a rifle-shot distant. Now we wait here till another hour is past, and then I will take thee to the spot where thou canst see all in safety."

"Hast thou no fear that we may not, too, be fired at by our friends?" I query. "The night is very dark, and how can the others distinguish us?"

"Nay," says Petar; "for that I have arranged. I am detailed with a score of others to watch the ford, and at eleven o'clock we meet there." His voice is reproachful as he adds, "Dost thou think I would lead thee into *danger*?"

I apologise, knowing well the caution taken by these reckless men for the safety of their guests; yet I muse how good Petar will safeguard me when the bullets fly at random. The time passes quickly, for Petar is an interesting talker, and the clock chimes out again.

"It is time," he says, and we rise, enveloping ourselves in our

cloaks. He walks along the tiny path below the overhanging cliff; for the Ribnica lies in a deep cutting, and not another word does he vouchsafe till, with a hoarse whisper, he answers a crisp challenge. Then other figures rise from the surrounding boulders. All the men I know, and silently they push forward and grasp me by the hand in welcome. Then Petar takes me to another cave smaller than the last, and with a natural parapet, over which I clamber. Once inside I see that no bullet can penetrate here, and smile at the thoughtfulness of these men. It is a weird scene. I can just distinguish the rough outlines of the great boulders which strew the river-bed, and opposite is the outline of the lofty bank, straight and unbroken. The river rushes with a gurgling pleasant sound over the shallow ford, and now, except Petar, who is peering intently over the parapet, not a soul is to be seen. The darkness has utterly swallowed up that little crowd of men, yet I know each boulder hides a keenly vigilant Montenegrin, like the watcher at my side, with rifle ready in the hand. Still the rain beats down, and I fall a-dreaming as the minutes drag wearily by. Perhaps I doze, when suddenly Petar lays his hand on my arm and points. With a start I follow the direction of that hand, and at first see nothing. Petar relaxes my arm, and I see that he is aiming. Then I see shadowy figures moving noiselessly between the boulders, and my

heart beats to suffocation. I count six of them gliding in single file, a pace or two separating each from the other. But two or three boulders divide the foremost man from the ford, who pauses instinctively, holding up his arm as a signal. The next instant a voice rings out, "Halt and surrender!" For an answer the six rifles of the Turks crash in the silence. Then the rifle at my elbow cracks with a report like thunder, flashes dart out from every boulder, and Petar has leapt the parapet. Scarce knowing what I do, I follow him, and a figure rushes up towards us. Petar clubs his rifle, but the fugitive deals him a mighty blow with his fist and he reels backwards, but recovers himself and sends a bullet after the flying man. Then follows a deathlike stillness for a few seconds, and the leader of the Montenegrins shouts an order to cease firing in the ravine and assemble on the cliff. Some scatter over the great plain, and now a shot rings out in the distance, then another and another, till the whole country-side would seem to be alive with the reports of rifles. The great slope of Fundina becomes a bed of fireflies, as the peasants turn out and pass on the alarm to their brethren in the mountains.

"Thou wast foolish to leave the cave," says a voice at my elbow. It is Petar, wiping the blood from a cut in his forehead.

"Why do they fire on the hills?" I ask. My voice sur-



prises me, and I am ashamed, for it trembles. "Are the Albanians attacking in force?"

"Nay, Gospodin," says Petar grimly; "none now will venture across the border to-night. That is the signal of alarm, and ere thou returnest to the town it will be full of men."

And it was so. The street

before the hotel is thick with men, many thousands of them, in bands under the leadership of their officers. Even as I go to my room, tired and wet to the skin, I hear still the distant tap of rifles from the border, and to this strange music, mingling with the buzz of the men in the street below, I fall asleep.

THE MORNING AFTER.

"Thou sleepest even as a man that hath had no rest for many nights," says Petar smiling. I rub my eyes, for the room is full of sunlight. "Come," he goes on, "thy horse is ready saddled below, and I will show thee the spot where last night we fought."

Quickly I dress myself, and the events of last night crowd into my brain, confused and indistinct as a dream. Gone is that mysterious army of men which had filled the street last night, and the only indications of the storm are lowering banks of clouds rolling over the mountains in the distance. Refreshed by the rain, the earth smells sweetly in the keen morning air, and drops sparkle on the trees in the sunshine.

Few people are about: my horse prances and chafes at the bit as we cross the little bridge, climbing the short steep ascent to the great plain of the Zeta. With long quick steps Petar walks at my side, and ever and anon he looks up at me with his bright smile. His tanned face shows no traces of the long

vigil through the night which he and others have kept.

"No," he says in answer to my question, "there came no more visitors. They were but a handful of half-starved soldiers from a frontier blockhouse seeking food. Had they but surrendered we should not have fired, but they sought their death." And Petar shrugs his shoulders.

It is not far across the plain. In half an hour we reach the fatal spot, where many men stand and lie about on the rain-sodden ground. Across the level sward towards the border not a soul can be seen; then come little houses, square and uninteresting,—they are the guardhouses,—and after them the mountains rising steeply into the banks of clouds. Doubtless they are dotted with waiting men, who would dearly love to descend on the plain and try conclusions with the Montenegrins. But woe betide the man who ventures to-day within range of the frontier guards!

"See," says Petar, leading me down a steep path towards

the foaming stream, "here they came. Each of these boulders hid a man, and here it was that the leading man halted. He must have caught some sound. Dost thou remember?" I nod vigorously. Never shall I forget that terrible second when those doomed men paused on the brink of eternity. "They fired at random. Look at the stars on the rocks, though not one fired a second shot. Come," and he goes towards the little cave that sheltered us. We turn a corner abruptly, and there at my feet lies a horrid sight. A man, in the ragged uniform of the Turkish infantry, half lies, half sits, with one knee drawn up as if in vain endeavour to rise. His hands have dug deep holes in the soft earth as he fought against death, and on his upturned face is depicted in awful colours his last agony. Sick and faint I turn to go; but Petar indifferently points to the little bloodstained jagged holes in the uniform. "Seven," he says laconically, checking them off with his finger.

"Good shooting," I answer, with what must be a ghastly smile, and I go towards another gendarme who is munching bread a little distance away. He proffers me a piece, which I refuse, and take a draught of raki from the bottle at his side. "Thou art pale," says the man, glancing at me keenly. "Hast thou, too, watched through the night?"

My reply is indistinct, and I seat myself upon a rock. It is indeed a scene fitted to doings of death, yet the warm sunshine lends to it an air of

peace. Jagged boulders dot the ravine in all directions, and in and out winds the path from the bank above to the water's edge, where with a twirl the river broadens out to the ford. The banks shelve inwards, forming a series of caves, and here and there masses of rock hang threateningly, awaiting the time when they, too, shall break away to join the confusion below. Petar joins us, and indicates a spot close by.

"There the other man struck me in his flight. He ran up that steep bank with eight bullets in him, and the ninth he got from me. That killed him, though he kept on for several hundred yards."

I see that Petar will not let me off, and I follow him up the path the stricken man took. Filled with wonder at such vitality, I emerge panting on the plain that ends so abruptly, as if cut with a knife at the river-bed. Two hundred yards away he lies face downwards, his foot caught in a bramble. He is a magnificent man of herculean proportions, and through his back is the bullet-hole which Petar proudly claims as his work.

"Another fled, wounded too, and one of the border guards shot him with his revolver. Wilt thou see him too?"

I decline. "It is enough," I respond.

"This will make good writing," says Petar beaming, "wilt it not? And wilt thou speak of me?"

I signify that he will be the hero of the story.

"In England ye have no

such fights?" he asks, rolling me a cigarette.

"We have no borders," I explain. "It is an island."

He looks disappointed. Plainly England sinks in his estimation, and I hurry to explain that in past days we had many such border raids when English and Scot were as Albanian and Montenegrin.

"Then we have our colonies," I add, and tell him of tribal wars in Northern India, of the Dervishes and the Zulus, and what I can remember at the moment. He is impressed.

"Then it must be good to be an Englishman," he says, nodding approvingly.

A group of horsemen is approaching, and Petar springs to the attention. It is the governor, a handsome, big man, and

some of his officers. He smiles as he sees me.

"I was afraid that you would have been here last night," he says in Italian, shaking hands. "I have special orders for your safety."

"The secret was very well kept," I answer, with a reassuring glance at Petar, who is looking uncomfortable.

"You must not ride near the border—it will be very dangerous for a few weeks," and turning to Petar he gives him an order not to leave my side or let me wander farther away in this direction. Petar salutes, and winks at me as the governor rides off.

Then we go back to breakfast, which he takes with me after many protests as to the honour I am doing him.

ACROSS THE BORDER.

There seems very little danger about the place, neither did the ride hither give any other impressions than that of an ordinary canter over a particularly level piece of country.

We are sitting in a room, which consists of windows and mats. Beyond a few rickety chairs produced for us and one or two Albanians squatting cross-legged on the floor, it is absolutely bare. The room, being on the first floor, commands through its many windows, devoid of glass, a view of the great square of Tusi, its fringe of disreputable hovels and attendant multitude of scavenger dogs. A little farther away to the left is a stream,

and a primitive bridge leading to a simple building, before which squads of Turkish infantry are learning the new Prussian march. To the right, a small hill rises from the level plain, on the top is a fort, and, broken occasionally by similar little hills, the great plain stretches away till it ends in the shimmery haze of the Lake of Scutari. Immediately behind the town is a great barren mountain, the first of the chain that tumbles in wild confusion from the plain of the Zeta, right across to Servia.

Just below us sits an aged man washing his head: presently another old man approaches him with a razor and shaves

his face and head. Across the ford, disdaining the use of the bridge, three unwieldy creaking two-wheeled carts with enormous loads of hay are drawn by patient oxen. The drivers, wild-looking men, their heads and faces swathed in cloths, each with a Martini rifle swinging picturesquely and handily from his shoulder, urge the oxen forward with long sticks. Two or three children in fezes are busily scraping ox-hides with knives, and lithe maidens in wide trousers cross the square with large pots of water on their heads. There is an air of sleepy indifference about the picture quite at variance with the rumoured dangerous character of the inhabitants; but all the same, should a Montenegrin show his face amidst this peaceful scene, his life would be worth just about two minutes' purchase.

That is why Buto the Turk has accompanied us, and the other man is an Austrian driver carefully wearing a European peaked cap. We stand a round of coffee, and rise perceptibly in the estimation of the other guests. One of them rolls us cigarettes, and they bring us little cups of sweetened milk.

Albert, a victim to the picture post-card craze, suggests sending a collection away to his friends, and we go to the post-office and inspect the cards. Owing to the amount of writing and elaborate decoration on the face of the card, he decides to send them, even if there is no picture on the back.

There is a great risk of their ever reaching their destination,

as I know from experience. "Also," says the genial postmaster, "a mail went yesterday." "The next leaves?" we query. The postmaster signifies with an eloquent gesture that this is a matter beyond him, and one to be decided by divine will.

We write about a dozen cards, and stop because there are no more. We have used up his stock and apologise. The postmaster smiles, and says politely that it does not matter. In a month or so he is expecting more, and in the meantime the good people of Tusi must write letters. Then he discovers that we must affix an additional stamp, the cards being for inland use. As this only adds to the highly effective appearance of the cards, we cheerfully buy the extra stamps, but of these he has only eight. Before we leave we have to tell him the names of the addresses and the destination, for him to add in Turkish characters. This gives rise to much quaint phonetic spelling, and when we pay we find each card has cost about double that of a foreign letter in other lands. Buto explains this to the postmaster with much heat and gesticulation, but without success. We leave him solemnly stamping each card, taking great care—as he shows us—that the post-mark shall be clearly legible.

I have a few lines of introduction to the military commandant from the Turkish consul at Podgorica, and this we proceed to present in state. The Beg lives in a two-storied building: the ground-floor being

in a dilapidated condition, he inhabits the upper story, and at his door stands a very ragged sentry, who presents arms as we pass. It is, even for us, an unwonted honour, and impresses Albert greatly. An unkempt officer presents us, and we bow towards an elderly Turk, who uncurls his legs preparatory to rising. We all shake hands very solemnly, and are waved to a bench opposite. Buto and the Beg converse in Turkish, while we drink coffee and accept cigarettes from the other two men in the room, a *hodja* (priest) and a civilian. This ceremonial duty over, we again bow, shake hands, and leave the room, to every one's relief, the ragged sentry again according us full military honours. We negotiate the broken staircase with caution, and decide that we have seen enough of Tusi. Ten minutes later we are in the saddle and cantering out of the town, preceded and followed by a dozen Turkish soldiers. It is only half an hour to the border, it is true; but accidents have happened, and the mountaineers are very much on the war-path just now, since nine of them were shot a few weeks ago.

At the border blockhouse, over which waves a very faded specimen of the Star and Crescent banner, we part from our escort, and pause for a moment on the narrow bridge spanning the historical Cievna. Deep down in a great fissure the green water rushes as through a sluice. It is broader below than at the top, over which a

man could jump with ease. With a swirl and a roar the water rushes past, breaking here and there into foamy patches. Many a hunted man, both Albanian and Montenegrin, has poured his life-blood into those clear waters. Few streams in Europe have witnessed such cruel deeds of death as has the little Cievna. Its source is in the unknown Proclotea, "the accursed mountains" of history, and indeed of to-day, for none can penetrate them. For the greater part of its course it forms the border line between two races living in perpetual feud with each other, and has been crossed and recrossed thousands of times by men intent on murder and with the lust of blood in their hearts.

We ride on. The evening is yet young, and Buto proposes a longer way home. We ford the Ribnica at the same spot as did the ill-fated Turkish soldiers from the very blockhouse we have just left, and note the mournful little cairns erected at the spots where Montenegrin bullets laid them low.

A young man of Kuć, on his way to his mountain home, joins us, as we walk our horses for a spell. He strides beside Buto a little distance from me, yet I can overhear the conversation. He inquires in flattering terms as to who I am.

"An English general," answers the mendacious Turk, "just from the Transvaal war."

The young mountaineer gazes at me in wonder and with great respect. He also thinks I do

not understand his language, and I blush at his compliments on my general appearance and probable accomplishments.

"Yes," continues Buto, indulging freely in this opportunity for "embroidery," "and he has one thousand florins a-day to spend as he likes. Even now in Tusi he has spent above thirty florins in coffee for the whole village."

I consider the well-meaning Buto has sufficiently perjured

himself, and urge my steed into a gallop. It is dark when we ride into Podgorica by another road than that we should have ordinarily used. It is a thoughtless action, and causes the aged Bairaktar and other friendly Turks to tramp to the borders seeking us that evening. It is well to be punctual in the Zeta, and to keep to the regulation paths and routes, should one wish to spare anxiety to expectant friends.

CHURCH PARADE.

The view is worth the climb, though Stefan, leaning on his rifle and mopping his brow, replies in monosyllables to my outburst of enthusiasm. The horses are nodding their heads vigorously, and their breath comes in short snorts, bearing witness to the heat and the long ascent. For four hours we have climbed from the valley of the Zeta, now stretched out like a map below us, and the great Lake of Scutari beyond already hazy in the coming heat. Before us lies the rocky tableland of Zatrijebač, and a mere speck in that sea of boulders is the little red-roofed church, our destination. The day is Sunday, and we are going to mass there and to rejoice the heart of good Father Giulio, the young Franciscan pastor of this savage flock. Great snow-clad mountains rise up before us, a medley of jagged peaks and sombre ravines forming Northern Albania. We have not been

more than a rifle-shot away from the border since we left Podgorica at daybreak. We walk down the steep path, our horses following us like well-trained dogs. At the foot we mount, and now the first houses of that scattered parish of Zatrijebač are passed, and from the many paths groups of men are converging on the main track. It is the congregation, and they are going to church, like the Covenanters of old, armed to the teeth. They are a pure-blooded Albanian clan under Montenegrin rule, clad as are their brothers in the mountains opposite, with but small distinctions in their costume, such as mark the different tribes. In common, too, with the rest of Northern Albanians, they are devout Roman Catholics, yet the Prince reckons them as his trustiest subjects. Not for nothing do they speak of their courage as proverbial. "As brave as the men of Zatrijebač" is a saying, and honestly they have earned

the compliment, and right well do they maintain it.

Under a large tree some dozen men have halted; friends hail them from the hillsides, and they are waiting for them. "God greet ye!" we say as we approach; but they give us the Albanian answer, "Well met, O brothers!"

Splendid men they are, in spotless white, the jackets with that quaint zigzag bordering of black braid which marks the clan. About their heads they wear long cloths, wound first round the top of the head, then round their sun-burnt faces, and finally about the neck. Tight-fitting black-braided trousers and a bandolier of cartridges as a sash, in which is stuck a long revolver, make up their picturesque attire.

They join us, and we ride on in the midst of that armed throng as if bent on a dare-devil border foray rather than to God's house. Rifles are slung as only the Albanians carry them, hanging from the right shoulder, nearly at right angles from the body, and hand resting on the butt. Few speak Serb, and one walks at my side.

"Is it loaded?" he asks, with a glance at my carbine. "It is well," he says, as I show him the magazine. "We have treacherous neighbours," and he nods at the hill on our right.

Fully a hundred men have joined us ere we near the church, and I canter on to greet the Father, who is doubtless meditating on his sermon. The churchyard is full, and all

press to the low wall in undisguised amazement. They take me for the doctor, the only being they deem possible to visit them in European clothes. One comes hurriedly forward unbandaging his arm, and a woman inquires at what hour I shall vaccinate.

A few minutes later, after nearly effecting an entrance by force,—the Albanian housekeeper expostulating indignantly at my intrusion till she recognised me,—and I am enfolded in the arms of the impulsive monk. A stalwart Albanian, fully armed, likewise bestows on me the kiss of greeting: he is the young sacristan. We sit and talk, for it is a year since we met, and my eye falls on certain jagged holes in the brown habit of Father Giulio. I had heard the story how his habit was riddled with bullets a few months ago while ministering to the dying on the field of battle. He notices my glance, and smiles deprecatingly.

"After mass," he says.

A few privileged old men come in bearing their weekly gifts—one a bottle of milk, another a cheese. They use the universal Catholic Albanian salutation, "May Jesus Christ be praised!" Father Giulio nods, and the sacristan goes out. A few moments later and a bell sounds over the peaceful scene. It is the signal for prayer, and a wild chanting commences.

"Pater noster," explains the young priest. "Now follows the Ave Maria. I have taught them to sing these prayers, but it was hard. Their idea of

music is so different to ours," and he sighs, thinking of sunny musical Italy and her grand singers; for he was once a student of philosophy in Rome, a gay young cavalier of ancient lineage, and still can sing the love-songs of his native city of Naples—though he does so reluctantly, and only when he has been enticed down for a few days' change to the semi-civilisation of Podgorica.

"Even now they have brought an element of their own music into mine."

It is indeed a strange music, rising and falling in quaint cadences, oddly like the weird chanting of the shepherds on the lonely mountain pasturages, yet breaking suddenly off into the old-fashioned Catholic intonations.

"I must prepare now," he says. "You can stand by the high altar if you will and watch the congregation."

But I know, pious as are the Albanians, my presence there would sadly detract from their religious duties, and I go round to the main portal and enter there.

What a quaint sight!

First come the women and girls, the younger ones greatly excited at my appearance; then the men, their head-cloths thrust back on their shoulders, disclosing half-shaven heads and great tufts of hair at the back. Inside the altar-rails are boys and three or four men, and they are the choir. Their singing is execrable. All are kneeling, or rather squatting on their feet, save two Montenegrins of the orthodox Church, — gen-

darmes, responsible for the order of the district,—and they are standing motionless in the midst of this strange assembly.

The service proceeds. At the most sacred part one and all prostrate themselves on the earthen floor, and the priest, clothed in rich-coloured vestments, is the only familiar object which meets the eye. The server is the same Albanian who rang the bell for prayer, and as he censures the priest and then the congregation, the incongruity of the scene is brought home; for he is in the full costume of an Albanian clansman, bandolier and revolver complete. He, too, collects the offertory, stalking in and out of the prostrate worshippers, clanking the coins in a tin can as he goes. Should one have no small money he opens the can and counts out the required change.

Strangest of spectacles! With mixed feelings I emerge in the open. Round the walls are stacked rifles, from the branches of the trees hang rifles, all loaded, and amongst them is the trumpet ready to blow the alarm. Two hundred yards away is the border. In the shade of a tree bearing such quaint fruit upon its branches I await the conclusion of the mass, and then the monk joins me, and we walk to the edge of the ravine of the Cievna, a view wellnigh unparalleled in the world. Three thousand feet below the little stream winds like a silver thread; opposite, the mountains rise far above us in height, and towering in

chains one above the other. The sides of the ravine are inaccessible, save here and there where a path zigzags down into the depths and up again on the other side. Those snow-capped peaks look so near that the heat is intensified by that cool contrast.

"It was here they fought. A little below us," says the monk, pointing to a shelving crag, "and there it was that I got these holes in my habit. It was dusk, you see, and they could not probably distinguish my dress. Also it was the most hotly contested point. We had two killed and five wounded at that spot. Yes; it was about the pasturages, of course. I did my best to stop the fight, and called them all to church; but while I was preaching, the first shot was

fired. Then of course it was no use speaking more, and I went with them. No; I was not afraid. Why should I be? My place is amongst my flock at all times. But they are brave, my flock. Sixty of them only against one thousand, and they drove them back till darkness stopped them. Afterwards it was dreadful when they brought the dead to the church and watched over them all night. That was worse than the battle. Over there, on yonder precipice, they fought twenty years ago. Come; it is time for dinner."

A young woman clothed in black—she could not be more than eighteen—passes us.

"She is one of the widows," says Father Giulio, acknowledging her reverence.

BORDER HEROISM.

"Good morning, Gospodja. Canst brew us a black coffee?"

The woman had run out of the hut at the clatter of our horses' hoofs, as they followed us up the last steep hill to Fundina. The day was still young, yet the sun burnt down on us with such lusty vigour that coats had been long discarded and our weapons were weighty nuisances.

"God greet ye, Gospodini," she says, bending over our hands in turn. "Coffee ye can have and a draught of spring water. More we have not in our poor *hân*" (khan).

She is a sturdy black-eyed

woman, stern and serious as a man, but her eyes have the look of sleeplessness and long vigil.

"Where is Keço, thy husband?"

"Away in the fields above. I will send for him." She nods towards the lofty slope above us, which terminates in a sheer precipice of grey rocks. The village—half-a-dozen huts—straggles up the hill, and one or two houses dot the valley below; but otherwise it is a wild and desolate scene, the doorway of the mountainous regions of north-east Montenegro and the alpine wilderness of Albania. At the foot

of the slope stretches the vast plain of the Zeta, with pleasant Podgorica in its middle, a tiny oasis in that rolling veldt, from whence we have journeyed this morning.

"Let him be," we answer, "for towards evening we return. Is he well and still unhurt?"

"He is well, thanks be to God!" responds the woman briskly, setting water to boil in a tiny tin can among the smouldering ashes of the wood-fire on the floor. She blows the embers into flame, talking disjointedly as she does so—

"We have not slept this night. They were seen towards dusk, and we watched till day-break. Treacherous dogs!—look here. They have begun firing at women—God curse them!"

In her skirt she displays a ragged bullet-hole, and spits with contempt on the earthen floor.

"Yes," she continues, "to draw my man they fired at me while he was in the hut, but he had his revenge. Two of them took remembrances back to Dinoš."

Dinoš is a village behind the ridge opposite, in Albania, inhabited by a set of cut-throats and thieves, who since Kečo avenged an insult by shooting two men in the street at midday have rested not to wipe out the shame. Seldom has such a deed of reckless bravery been done in these lands as that of crossing the border in broad daylight and killing his enemies in full sight of the entire village.

This Kečo has done, and his fame as a hero is great in Montenegro. Grimly and contemptuously he sits and waits for the bullet that *must* finally lay him low, but he watches incessantly. A few more deaths have been added to his reckoning since then, and the men of Dinoš are more wary. Still it is a terrible life to lead for him, and perhaps more so for his young wife. We mention this to her as she hands us our coffee deftly on a tray. She laughs scornfully.

"My man must die, but not yet. When he does I shall be the widow of a hero, and as proud as any woman in the land. First he will kill many yet."

"Thou hast no children, Gospodja. Art thou glad?"

"Yea, I am glad. My mother bore seven sons, and all were killed one night on these hills in a blood-feud. Their heads were taken to Dinoš, but my mother stole across at night and brought them back. Thus were they buried as men. I remember the night, and then I am glad that I am barren." She pauses for a moment. "God punish me for my words, for who shall avenge my husband? Who is more fitted than the son his father?"

"What do we pay thee?" we are saying.

"What thou wilt. Ye are very welcome."

The sun is nearing the farthestmost range when we again draw rein before Kečo's house. We are late, for in the mountains we had struck upon an old acquaintance, one Achmed

Uiko, assassin, murderer, and very good fellow when not actively engaged in business. We had met him saddling up outside a wayside *hân* on the border two hours' distance from here, and in the company of a villainous set of Albanians in spotless white head-cloths, the head-gear of the clan of Gusinje, perhaps the most treacherous clan of the whole of Albania. Achmed had insisted on playing host, and in the midst of that assembly in a half-dark room we had consumed much raki. Each man sat with his rifle between his knees, and eyed us with suspicious curiosity. Then Achmed had proposed to us to visit him in his little fortress on the border, given him by a generous Prince, and spend the night.

"Thou hast long promised to come," he had said to me, to whom once he had narrated the story of his life,—a story as full of adventure and hair-breadth escapes as any ever written,—and told of his murders with a simple ingenuity that caused his listener to pinch himself repeatedly. I urged lamely the expense of the horse, which I must return that evening, being hired; but he had promptly offered to pay for it himself. I accepted; but the trusty Stefan, my servant, had got into trouble in the meanwhile with a man of Gusinje who had demanded to examine his rifle. Stefan has no tact, and even Achmed admitted it were better to go.

"Hadst thou gone," said Stefan as we rode away, "I would have accompanied thee;

but we should not have seen Podgorica to-morrow nor the next day. Treacherous scoundrels!"

And I had had great difficulty to prevent the fiery Hungarian sergeant from shaking his fist at the group.

"We should have been safe with Achmed," I expostulate. "He has eaten bread in my house."

"I trust not any man who lives across the border, or who comes from there." (Achmed is a Christian Turk, though now a loyal subject of the Prince.)

That is the worst of Stefan. He is prejudiced, and not a safe man to take amongst Albanians or Turks.

The villagers of Fundina are congregated on the little stone-platform before Keço's house. The men, each with his rifle, greet me impulsively, for they know me well. They chase away the too curious children, and the next moment one has borne off my field-glasses to a delighted group, and another, who has seen my carbine before, is demonstrating the mechanism of a sporting carbine to an appreciative circle of soldier-peasants.

Then Keço comes and kisses me,—a middle-sized man of about forty, modest and unassuming, with nothing of the fire-eater in his appearance.

"I declare thy life suits thee," I tell him. "Thou art looking splendid."

Last year when we were here—it was a short time after his celebrated deed—he was wasted and nervous, and his hand

shook so that he could scarce roll a cigarette.

"I have got used to it," he answers smiling. "Yet they are worse now than ever. There is much money on my head," he adds proudly, "and the men of Dinaš are very poor."

We drink our coffee and prepare to go. The light is rapidly failing.

"Ye cannot go down to-night. No man takes this path at dark. Sleep here and leave at daybreak."

I refuse. Last year we slept here once, and a dozen men kept watch and ward throughout the night. The choice is the same,—the chance of an ambuscade on the path down to the Zeta or a midnight alarm up here.

"Then ye must take men with ye," insists Kečo, and is immovable in this resolve.

An embrace and we part, accompanied by two talkative jovial men, whom we send back,

sorely against their will, round the next bend.

Then darkness comes, and we dismount, to stumble and fall over the rock-strewn track, often losing it, and bruising our feet sorely.

Stefan slings his rifle and walks with drawn revolver in his hand. It is a weird journey, and we start at every bush. At last the lights of Podgorica twinkle over the gloomy plain, and the little Ribnica shines as a silver band in the pall-like darkness. Past the cairns erected to fallen Turkish marauders, and then the tinkle of a sheep-bell proclaims that all danger is over. The shepherd is beguiling his weary vigil with a pipe, on which he is playing a quaint tune.

Before the inn sits the governor, and his brow is black.

"It was the choice of two evils." I conclude my explanation, and we go in to a well-earned supper.

REGINALD WYON.

THE NEEDS OF OXFORD.

AFTER two decades of comparative neglect by the public, recent events have combined to rivet attention on the University of Oxford. The bequest of Mr Rhodes came pat to the moment when the objects, methods, curricula, and machinery of education—primary, secondary, tertiary—in Great Britain were stirring anxiety, and evoking fierce demands for relentless revision; when also the warning to the old country “to wake up,” proclaimed by pessimists and prophets, had been baptised with the emphatic imprimatur of exalted authority. And in response came a disagreeable declaration that the ancient seats of learning should be the first to give heed to the writing on the wall. Then followed the stern Report of the Commission on the Education of Officers, with its open hints at the desirable recruiting-grounds hitherto unworked at Oxford and Cambridge; next followed the Bodleian Tercentenary and its painful moral—a great and historic treasury of learning starving in the midst of a world of bounty-fed Free Libraries; close on the heels of the Tercentenary trod the acrimonious controversy over compulsory Greek in Respon-

sions, which overflowed its academic banks into the sea of the newspapers; and now, finally, the Hebdomadal Council has published officially “Statements of the Needs of the University”—the results, in fact, of a sweeping inquiry by the Boards of Faculties, Professors, Readers, Heads of Institutions and Departments, in which, in the cold blood of a Blue-Book, the deficiencies which mutilate the efficiency of the University are scheduled and linked to a vast programme of the reforms required to enable Oxford to act up to its ideals. The “Statement” is depressing reading, and in any case much must remain unintelligible to the uninitiated, in whom the complicated constitution of Oxford creates the fear and wonder that the machinery of a first-class battleship inspires in a Patagonian. Moreover, no little of what is pleaded for in these weighty pages has no attraction for the man on the top of the electric tram, who can see no use in Readers in Assyriology, in funds that will buy MSS. or calendar the papyri washing-bills of dead Egyptians. One conclusion, however, is clear: Oxford, like South Africa, the navy, the army, and the hospitals, wants money; it wants it in millions; and it has no Chancellor of the Exchequer to squeeze, and no electorate to cajole.

But the public is not quite satisfied. The academic attitude towards reform irritates the bald-headed man at the back of the omnibus, who is so anxious to march to the dictates, as he interprets them, of the *Zeit-Geist*. Science, techno-

logical institutes, modern languages, schools of commerce, laboratories—these are reasonable claims for subscriptions; they spell in the long-run ships, commerce, and the Empire; but “a sleepy old university” founded by medieval priests, worked by “the children of finance,” impenitently clinging to the rags of an antiquated Humanism! how can you maintain a supremacy in trade or paint some more of the map red with such a hopeless weapon as this? As well oppose pop-guns to maxims, and triremes to submarines propelled by turbines. The don, he is convinced, muddles away six months in teaching obsolete subjects at a ruinous expense to the sons of the aristocracy, and idles the other six months in Italy or Norway. And Great Britain meanwhile perishes. What the Empire calls for in Oxford, as elsewhere, is an institution worked on business lines, and anticipating every vibration in the thermometer of the national temperature,—an institution that will pay dividends on a capital that is turned over every year: let money go by all means to Birmingham, Owens College, or London,—they are new, plastic, and amenable to common-sense, —but Oxford, already richly endowed, has put itself out of court. Mr Rhodes’ benefaction, it is true, somewhat shook this fine pity of the practical mind. That “an empire-builder” should go out of his way to provide for the sons of the Empire being sent to this antiquated seat of dead lan-

guages and exploded German philosophies was disconcerting. But obviously, if Oxford was to get so much,—and the newspapers wallowed in figures,—clearly she had no right to expect more, and the case for Birmingham was stronger than ever. Yet to discuss the problem of the Rhodes’ scholars until the detailed scheme on which Mr Parkin is travelling has been fully worked out, would be unprofitable; and even then it will prove to be a matter of purely domestic interest, of internal organisation, of details that will not furnish copy for the advertisement column. At the same time, it is not amiss to point out that colonial undergraduates, even Americans and Germans, will be no new and startling apparition in the High Street or the lecture-rooms, and that the scheme as chalked out by the donor is a very pretty illustration of the mistakes that the expert commits when he trespasses on spheres other than his own. Canada, for example, has more than two provinces; and Mr Rhodes, in “promoting” his Imperial programme, forgot to provide working capital, inasmuch as he required a poverty-stricken university to house and teach three hundred new scholars without providing a penny to equip them with teachers, house-room, or apparatus. It is as if a philanthropic millionaire were to bequeath to a friend, whose small income was mortgaged to its last sixpence, a dozen splendid carriages and a stableful of hungry horses,

and expect him out of the atmosphere of a historic tradition to build stables, feed the noble creatures, and create and pay the requisite staff of trained stablemen. Accordingly, in May last, the University found itself the richer by three hundred future scholars, together with the bracing knowledge that its own funds were nil, the staff of the colleges already doing full time, the colleges manned to overflowing, and the world crying out, "What good fortune! What wealth!"

That the University and the colleges set themselves in earnest to adopt the scheme, no matter what the sacrifice, is a symptom of the spirit that can animate a "somnolent medievalism." But had the dons promulgated such a plan, how the welkin of Fleet Street would have rung with stimulating sarcasm on the sterile futility of the children of finance. That Oxford will somehow absorb the Rhodesians and not the Rhodesians Oxford is as true as that the sun will rise to-morrow, and, after all, that is the only important matter; and so the don, after a shrug of his shoulders at the curious ways of the curious, passes on to a generous confession that if Mr Rhodes had done nothing else, he has done yeoman service in focussing the public mind on the unlimited possibilities latent in the oldest of our universities. An imperial Oxford! that is a conception which may well fire the mind and elevate the sentiment of every British citizen from Gibraltar to Vancouver; and an imperial university we may

slowly build up if we are not in too great a hurry.

The situation, in short, calls for deep and frank probing of the fundamentals that underlie the serried statistics and the impressive dossiers compiled in the miniature Blue - Book of the Hebdomadal Council. Let us recall that in 1877 the University was thrown into the parliamentary crucible, and after four years spent as Royal Commissions spend them a new system was hammered out, and Oxford statutorily required to work it. To-day the invariable question of the modern mind is once more heard—"You! the University—what have you done since I last saw you overhauled, cleaned, and garnished?" Some broad preliminaries, then, are germane both to the inquiry and the answer. Obviously since 1881 much water has flowed under Folly Bridge, down the St Lawrence, the Ganges, the Parramatta, and the Zambesi. In a word, that complex of sentiments and forces, economic, social, and political, the sum of which we dub imperialism, has taken concrete shape. We are all agreed that a party which excludes from its programme imperialism, however it may interpret the term, will unquestionably be condemned to plough the sands till the sands swallow it. It is equally true, though not yet recognised, that the universities which forget the imperial factor will not be the universities of the future. Next, let us note that the demands for, and the apparatus of, education have already quadrupled. The

Oxonian who left his college in 1877 and returned in 1903 would find, amongst many strange things, Mansfield College, Manchester New College, Roman Catholic Hostels—the establishments of the “heterodox” flourishing comfortably right under the shadow of the great tradition. He will see colleges with new quadrangles, the Indian Institute, schools of Pedagogy, Geography, and English Literature, a Museum whose laboratories press on the sacred reserves of athletics, four or five Women’s Halls, and the Women Home Students. In the sunny walks of the Parks, while he stares at hockey and lacrosse, he will trip over the perambulators and the other impedimenta of married tutors. But he also discovers that the income of the University has not increased, and he will speculate on the diabolical connection between agricultural depression and educational needs that multiply with the speed of bacilli. Thirdly, he will recall the increase in the army and navy: we want to-day four times as many officers as we did; and the military experts now at last admit that an officer may be the better for a university education; some even dare swear he should be required to have it. Fourthly, the needs of the public service have been decupled. The system of examination for the Civil Services (Home and Indian) has been remodelled, and Oxford is now expected to furnish, say, half of the Civil Services, as well as to maintain increased and better-

trained supplies to the professions of teaching, the clergy, the law, and the rest. Why should she not also, we may ask, provide commerce with brain-stuff that has been properly educated and disciplined, and so enable the heart of a nation’s life to pump the best blood for the nourishing of that nation’s life? Fifthly, the last twenty years have witnessed a tremendous reaction in favour of purely scientific studies, as against the discipline of mind through literature. Hence the attack on Greek, the demand for French and German (one of the keys to the comparative study of science). Britain, we are reminded, is being beaten, not by muscle and physique, but by the spectacled professor in the Teutonic laboratory, by the labour-saving appliances of the American manufacturer. Agriculture, forestry, chemistry, brewing, engineering in all its protean forms, must be recognised by the modern university, or that university must go, unless the nation is prepared to go with it. And even if literary studies are to have their humble niche, the whole curriculum requires drastic remodelling. Economics and modern history, as they are understood to-day, are virtually new subjects, providing a satisfactory education in themselves; archaeology and anthropology cannot be treated any longer as the down-trodden handmaids of classical scholarship; and if a liberal education through literature is still an essential, why not through living languages

with a historic as well as a living literature, instead of continuing what Mr H. G. Wells calls "mumbling over" the dead classics? These and similar obstinate questionings are not, we are frankly told, to be pooh-poohed out of existence by a dull non-possumus. Lastly, in 1880 Oxford and Cambridge, with endowments not yet crippled by agricultural depression, had as universities a virtual monopoly. To-day London, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Wales, have entered into justifiable and sharp rivalry, — a subsidised competition in which new apparatus and curricula, new ideals and increasing revenues, are intended to challenge, with every prospect of success, the monopoly hitherto enjoyed by Oxford and Cambridge. And beyond the Tweed the schools of Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Aberdeen have found in Mr Carnegie a lavish patron. The public conscience certainly is a curious organ: if Liverpool or London begs sturdily it is applauded; yet such an appeal from Oxford would be called an undignified whine. But apart from this vagary of irrational sentiment, Oxford, with a stationary income, is confronted with a subsidised competition which will certainly become more severe. Can this competition be neglected, or its moral ignored? Will it have no effect on the quality, as well as the quantity, of the recruits that Oxford must have to maintain her position? Can she afford to say she has nothing to learn and nothing to forget?

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The nation to-day says "No." It expects Oxford to be what it was in 1880—to harmonise into an ordered and efficient system the legacy and tradition of the past with the demands of the present and the ideals of the future. That, we take it, is the problem in a nutshell. But how? Presumably, however, it is apparent that once the problem is thus stated, a mere schedule of needs, many pages of figures, are not an answer which really goes to the root of the matter. By all means let Oxford overhaul her machinery, note all her needs, and compare her stock with that of her rivals and that required by her own ideals—but something more is required.

And, first, let us postulate that if there is to be reform at all, it must be reform from within. Oxford does not desire, must make it indeed obvious that it will not tolerate, parliamentary interference: it does not want another Commission to dislocate studies, disorganise machinery, and spend three years in taking evidence and three months in patching together a creaking compromise suitable to the date at which the Commissioners started their exhausting labours. That British method may be safely left to the War Office and the Mandarins of Pall Mall. All that is required can be done by the University itself: it has not stood still since 1880, and the patient combines a unique knowledge of his own ailments with a trained capacity, and no

small desire, to diagnose and cure them. The desire for real efficiency is alive to-day, and the Blue-Book of the Hebdomadal Council silences the sceptical on that point. Secondly, we must not forget—the British parent forgets it, of course, or rather he has never mastered the elementary proposition—that a university like Oxford has dual functions. It is not simply a laboratory, a gigantic school of higher education; it is also, and must continue to be, a seat of learning. The education of most of its members ceases to be sure with the B.A. degree; but the education of many others can never come to an end. And to such its inspiration, encouragement, and rewards must ever be decked with the freshness of youth and the strength through which the heavens are strong. On Oxford all learning and scholarship, all research and all knowledge, all science and all literature, have a paramount claim to find employment and encouragement within her portals.

And here let us pin the discussion down for a moment by framing a brief catechism, suggested by the considerations advanced. Let us ask—1. Are the University and the colleges doing all that their resources permit for the encouragement of learning and the promotion of research? 2. Are the colleges using and choosing their tutors in the most effective way? 3. Are they likely to get and to retain in the future, with the same ease as in the past, the staff and the services

that the University and the colleges really need? 4. Is the system of University and college finance so framed and worked as to secure efficiency—financial and intellectual? Is it so framed as to combine the new needs of the University and the Empire with those of the old? 5. Is Oxford welcoming as they deserve the new studies which have arisen since 1880, without forgetting the extended borders of the old? 6. Is her machinery so devised as to supply the public services—the professions—as they have altered, with the men trained as they ought to be trained in the number that is required? 7. What is being done to assist the army in providing it with educated officers? 8. Are the colleges tapping the social strata which will supply the recruits that Oxford requires for all that she hopes to do?

In a word, Is the University to her utmost possibility educating capable men (and women?), creating and employing the best kind of teachers, fostering the best knowledge? The present writer at any rate, who is not of those who believe that Oxford has stood still, or is sunk in sloth, far from it, certainly could not answer these and similar questions with an unhesitating affirmative, and he is convinced that scarcely one competent person who knows the facts would do so either. This, let it be said at once, is not tantamount to a sweeping recommendation to scrap the existing system and install in its place a brand-new set of the latest appliances in educa-

tional mechanics, which in a couple of decades will require the same ruthless scrapping. Heaven protect the University from the refuge of the desperate witless—the melting-pot! A university whose physicians can only prescribe the melting-pot and pray for a miracle to clinch the work of the melters is only fit for the auctioneer or for exhibition at a World's Fair. To-day the two most menacing dangers to higher education are, first, the tendency to forget that it is Oxford's duty to provide a liberal, not a technical, education—the best, not a good, education—the quality, not the quantity and variety, of the manufactured article,—her mission to champion to the last the supreme value of the useless as against the commercially useful in training the mind; and, secondly, the tendency to obliterate and then deny the vital distinction between studies which are the fittest instruments of the best education and studies which are most appropriately allotted to the trained researcher. The reformers, the specialists, the commercialists, the researchers, the men in the street, are crying out wildly, but with reason. You are doing nothing for the new needs of science, say they. You are ignoring the claims of research and knowledge; you are deaf to the warnings of commercial, technical competition; you call yourself a university, and in every department you are being left behind by Germany, America, France. And so the repre-

sentatives of each of these subjects unite to squeeze recognition of it into the existing curriculum, with the result that a patchwork is being cobbled together which is steadily sapping the fundamental essentials of a liberal education, and at best is the pettiest sop to the legitimate claims of this or that particular department of knowledge and research; and the Oxford schools, if this process of tinkering continues, will end in the fiasco which invariably results from trying to cram a gallon of fine wine into a quart-pot.

No; we must grasp clearly the two totally distinct functions of the University as such—its function to provide a liberal education, and its function to be a seat of learning. And there will be no permanent or beneficial reform until these principles have vitalised and purified the whole structure from top to bottom. And what will happen then will be roughly this. The undergraduate will take his degree after training in a curriculum which a unique experience and knowledge has proved to be the best liberal education that the wit of man can devise. He will not be a fully fledged doctor, barrister, journalist, schoolmaster, civil servant, historian, diplomatist, lawyer, manager of a great business; but he will be better fit to become a member of any profession, to go anywhere and do anything. And conquer he will the young men drilled only to tread one narrow track, because the prin-

oiple on which he has been trained is that the value of an education turns not on the quantum of facts acquired, but on the quantum of power to acquire which has been imparted. And then the University will say, See, I have provided for you post-graduate schools, in which you can study as a properly equipped student any and every branch of knowledge which it is desirable human brains should pursue. True, these post-graduate schools do not exist. Oxford, then, must create them—schools in economics, sociology, archæology, art, and all the branches of science that science demands: they may have courses of one or two or three years, they may provide degrees and classes, honours or pass, they may be few or many, but come they must if liberal education is to be saved, and the just claims of knowledge and research are to be met. For they are, and must be, part of the machinery which she provides as a seat of learning.

Furthermore, Oxford must frankly sacrifice the last dyke of the Anglican tradition which still closes the B.D. and the D.D. to all but the Anglican. A Nonconformist to-day can obtain a first-class in the Honour school of theology (theology as a branch of education), he cannot obtain the B.D. and the D.D.: in other words, theology as a department of knowledge and research is still corseted in a religious test. The B.D. must be made like the B.C.L., the D.D. as the D.C.L., degrees open without reserve to

every worker who can satisfy the requirements of knowledge; and then, and not till then, will Oxford be able to say that in theology as in law, in medicine, history, or mathematics, she knows of no sect, no faith, no schools—she recognises and knows only the servants of knowledge and the seekers after truth. And the University will then have an incontrovertible answer to the red-caps that would assault her educational system. You must prove, she will say, that your subject is not merely educationally good in itself, but educationally *better* than what already is prescribed. To those who urge she is neglecting a branch of knowledge, she will reply, "Prove to me that your subject is a fit branch of knowledge for educated students and serious research, and I will gladly provide you with a post-graduate school in it"; and this position will be based on a clear perception of her dual functions as a University. Furthermore, Oxford to-day, like Cambridge, is a University of England—she has yet to make herself a University of the Empire. The prestige of these two ancient universities is an imperial asset—it is an educational asset likewise—and Oxford men, who learn with no little astonishment that the Empire values Oxford, must now resolutely show that Oxford values the Empire. She can hope to draw from Sydney, Cape Town, Calcutta, or Toronto but a handful of undergraduates. But she can—she

must — offer them her post-graduate schools. Let her then, for the sake of the Empire if for no other reason, create this machinery; let her insist that these post-graduate courses will be the broadest, the most properly equipped, the best taught, that she may have her share of the Bachelors in Arts of Toronto, Cape Town, Calcutta, or Sydney who desire to study (not to be educated), to pursue knowledge, to partake in research, to acquire learning — yes, and of the bachelors of Harvard and a dozen American universities. To-day they go to Berlin or Paris, Vienna or Heidelberg. But to-morrow she can become the fostering-mother of hundreds who now would seek her home, but cannot because that home is not. It is no idle dream. It is a prospect based on facts. And will not the University in turn be doubly blessed with the learning of him who gives and him who takes? The blood of the Empire will circulate in her arteries; she will be imperial in the truest sense, the apex of the educational system, to whom many of the men of the future throughout the Empire will be drawn, from whom they will go out instinct with a new loyalty and gifted with a new spirit. In education, as in commerce, it is quality in the long-run that commands a monopoly — a quality which is the product of brain and insight. The university that to-day can produce articles which in quality and finish are the best in the intel-

lectual market will command that world's market. Oxford is not yet that university; but the Rhodes scholars are coming: some of them will require education, but many, perhaps most, will demand training in a seat of learning. And even without the Rhodes scholars, whether she will make herself one of the truly imperial universities in Britain will depend on herself. If she consents, a new chapter will open in her own history and in the history of the Empire.

But the catechism requires us to pass on. The public services, the army — what of them? After ten years of the new system of examination for the combined Home and Indian Civil Service, it is becoming fairly clear that on the one side the universities, in whose interests the new system was framed, will have to face an increasingly severe competition from the crammers, naturally bent on recovering the virtual monopoly which they enjoyed previously to 1892; and, secondly, that the public service as a career exercises an increasing attraction for young men of ability. It offers to the requisitely trained a certainty, reasonable pay for the majority, a decent pension, a desirable social status, unlimited scope for all kinds of brains and character, and no small number of big prizes to the fortunate and the specially gifted. It is, happily, beyond dispute that it is in the interest of the Civil Service that its servants should be university-trained men; and it is the duty of Oxford to pro-

vide that this should be secured. At present Oxford is awakening to an unpleasant dilemma. An increasingly large number of the scholars of colleges desire to make the Civil Service their career; in the stress of the fierce competition they have discovered that the subjects of the Oxford curriculum do not necessarily secure success in the examination. Accordingly an increasing number either leave Oxford in their fourth year, and have recourse to special preparation elsewhere, or else neglect some of their purely Oxford work to master additional subjects not recognised in the Oxford schools. In the former case Oxford loses them to the crammer; in the latter the colleges suffer because their scholars fail to do themselves complete justice in the Honour schools. The colleges naturally resent both results, but particularly the latter. Why should they turn themselves into nurseries for securing success in Civil Service examinations, to the detriment of the University and its scheme of a liberal education? Nevertheless, facts must be faced. The Civil Service will continue increasingly to attract, and, unless the colleges and the University frankly recognise the situation, it is they and not the Civil Service which will go to the wall. Two courses suggest themselves. First, the University must, by methods known to itself, see that the examination is so modelled and conducted as to secure that those subjects which are required in the interests of a liberal education

as given at Oxford and Cambridge are allotted their proper proportion of marks. Secondly, —and this will be much more distasteful, — the University must recognise the existence and importance of the Civil Service examinations: if changes are required in the Oxford curriculum, those changes must be made; if supplementary teaching is required in additional subjects, — economics, modern languages, &c., — that supplementary teaching must be provided by the University. A small Permanent Board of Organisation — a paid Intelligence Department — of really efficient experts must be created, to overhaul and supervise permanently machinery, methods, and results. The duties of this Intelligence Department broadly, then, will be to maintain the examination on the basis of a truly liberal education; to suggest amendments to the University and the Civil Service Commissioners; to think out the policy and to maintain the teaching and teachers necessary within the University itself. The interests of the Civil Service — the interests of the University — the interests of a liberal education unite in calling for this Board. The new situation has been created by the needs of the Empire, and it carries with it a duty imposed by the facts and their importance. The University can, without sacrificing a single element that it rightly values, thus take a sure step towards becoming an imperial university, which will give it an assured command of the

educational machinery of the Empire, fresh and potent appeal to the homage of the sons of the Empire, new and illimitable fields for conquest by the principles of its intellectual system. If it refuses, it will have failed in a clear duty, and it will have surrendered to less competent hands its own privileges and prerogatives. For if Oxford will not do it the crammer will.

A similar line of argument applies to the army. If Oxford shows itself ready to grasp a unique opportunity,—offered practically in the War Office report,—it should be able in two or three years to send yearly into the army 100 officers, perhaps 200, educated in her schools, stamped with her character. All that is required is the will to call into existence another small Intelligence Department—a Board of Military Education—whose duty will be to devise a scheme under which young men will be encouraged to enter the University, knowing that, once there, they will be educated with a view to obtaining commissions, on a system which will give them the advantage in their career of being university bred. That certain changes will have to be made is undeniable, that special arrangements must be provided, a supplemental staff and so on set up. If Oxford refuses, from sloth, academic indifference, or any other reason, she will learn that universities, like nations, which fail in their intellectual duties are punished as they merit in the long-run.

These “reforms”—more truly alterations in detail, to make explicit what is already implicit—have, amongst other objects, the blessed end “efficiency.” The efficiency of the teachers is necessarily a prime concern to every university, because the best teachers in the long-run mean the best pupils. Now, efficiency in this sense is a particularly delicate subject for Oxford. It is also a subject which defies treatment in the concrete. Oxford has, like every other institution, its square pegs jammed into very round holes, and the problem of efficiency is how to reduce that number to a minimum. There are to-day, be it said frankly but with regret, professors who neglect their duties, tutors who cannot teach, men appointed to perform tasks which notoriously they either perform badly or not at all, because they are incompetent, idle, or interested in other things. The facts are known inside the system—in some cases they are known outside, in which cases they do incalculable damage. No machinery can either cure or prevent the recurrence of such clogs: it is a question of creating a new spirit, new traditions, new canons, and new ideals. In the coming stress of competition, and coming it is with a vengeance, unless the University and colleges are prepared to insist at all costs on the efficiency of every teacher, great or small, to sacrifice personal and highly creditable feelings, to sift, examine, promote, or pass over by the light of performance alone, no ma-

chinery, no reforms in organisation or detail, will avail. The institutions which, like the great business firms, pay the market price and see that they get the value for their money will secure the ability, and beat all along the line the institutions which do not. Personal loyalty has played a great part in the history of Oxford; but in the new age a university will not be able to live on loyalty alone. The struggle of the universities will be determined by the same factors that determine other struggles in a world of remorseless competition. The fittest alone will survive. Will Oxford have the wisdom and the courage to insist on this being done? Oxford alone can answer.

But, it will be objected, all these changes, great or small, mean money. Finance is the root of the matter, and we cordially agree, with the proviso that the financial problem is not so simple as it looks. The University has published an authoritative report specifying needs, to satisfy which money in large sums is required. Provide us, cry the objectors, with the money, and all will be well. But will it? is the financial question really so simple a sum in arithmetic? The unkind say, for example, that you do not get the money because not merely the uninstructed public is not convinced you deserve to have it. The malevolent even venture to retort that Oxford does not make an efficient use of the resources undeniably at her dis-

posal. Take an example—the body known as the Delegates of the Common University Fund. Are the performances of this body, controlling no small sums of money, and its relation to the Hebdomadal Council, the University, the teachers, the colleges, and the Museum such as inspire confidence or satisfaction? Is it a body to which the colleges or the reformers are eagerly prepared to intrust still larger sums? Well, spend a term in Oxford and ask the question, and the answers will surprise you.

The present elaborate hierarchy of Councils, Boards, and Delegacies is, in fact, the system set up in 1880, and into it has been piecemeal incorporated all the additional machinery created *ad hoc* by the pressure of needs that have come into existence since then. Well-disposed critics, not without reason, assert that much of the system is unnecessarily complicated and cumbrous, no little of it antiquated and calculated to defeat the ends for which it was created; that in principle it fails to connect responsibility with power; that in working it is at the mercy of sectional interests fighting, and rightly fighting, under the system, for their own hand against the hand of all and several. Seriously, has not the time come when the University should frankly and unsparingly overhaul its central governmental machinery, and aim at effecting those reforms which will secure a maximum of intellectual efficiency with a minimum of effort

and of financial waste? Moreover, universities, like national armies, need a Thinking Department, a Brain which is primarily occupied with the fundamental problems of the higher strategy and tactics. Oxford to-day demonstrably suffers externally and internally from the absence of an intelligible and authoritative policy framed to meet constantly increasing and competitive claims on its resources, a policy based on a reasoned answer to the question, "For what purposes does the University exist?" For example, in the Blue-Book so often alluded to, the responsible authority compiles a tremendous statement of claims, and at the outset explicitly "thinks it best to express no opinion regarding the urgency of the several needs thus brought to light"—the one thing that every reasonable man desires to know. And then surprise is expressed at the apathy of public opinion and the callousness of the millionaire. To be sure, it is clear that a number of individuals, more or less important, are sturdily begging for a number of things more or less urgent. But does the University guarantee their claims or pledge its word that what is demanded is indispensable? Who can say until an official Intelligence Department will by an authoritative programme take the nation into its confidence and explain what the University wants to do and why? There is no international conspiracy against Oxford. It will be time enough to complain of

starvation and neglect when Oxford has done all that she can for herself, when the public declines to listen to a reasoned appeal. National universities which are doing a nation's work in a businesslike way, as a rule, are not permitted to go bankrupt.

But finance opens up other problems, not commonly touched on, and vitally connected with efficiency. It will perhaps not be out of place to indicate their character by a brief reference to facts and figures. And first, the question of payment of the staff. Oxford is slowly discovering that in a hard world of competition brains, other things being equal, will in the long-run be commanded by pounds, shillings, and pence, as every business man knows and acts on. If Oxford desires to be an imperial university it must have an imperial staff—i.e., the best that can be gathered together. But Oxford must be able to say to A or B, You are the man I want, and I will make it worth your while to stay with me and do my work. To-day the competition for the brains educated at Oxford is a very different thing to what it was in 1880, and the competition is increasing, will increase, and will not diminish. The University and colleges, just as the public schools, are beginning to feel the pinch of the competition above all of the public services. Except in rare instances, where a man is marked out by temperament or private means for a scholar's life, ability flows where the rewards are most satisfactory. If a college

or a university can only say, I will start you with £400 a-year, but at forty you may be getting perhaps £600, and at sixty ditto; and other competing authorities tell a very different tale,—the colleges will not in the long-run have first pick. Be it remembered, too, that marriage is now recognised, that the standard and cost of living have risen and are rising, that dons are human, and the issue is clear.

If the colleges are not in the future to be driven to the wall, they must be able to prove that the career of a teacher, reckoned in £. s. d., can reasonably compare with the bar or business, journalism, school-mastering, or the Civil Service. In other words, the college tutor must be better paid, not at first, but in his later stages, or natural laws will assert themselves, and that spells the second-rate taken on compulsion. To speak plainly, the colleges no longer can rely on loyalty or an implied basis of private means, or if they do, they and the University, the nation and the Empire, will suffer. And in this connection another suggestion also may be made. Some American universities have adopted, with praiseworthy wisdom, the principle of the Sabbatical year—*i.e.*, every eight years they require their professors to spend twelve months outside the United States. Why should the colleges not do the same for their tutors in Oxford—*viz.*, insist that every eighth year he shall *study* on full pay for twelve months elsewhere

than in Great Britain or Ireland? No university can suffer from a plethora of ideas. An Oxford whose colleges were yearly being replenished by trained teachers who knew the Empire at first hand, or had periodically studied in non-British universities, would be a very different Oxford to that which exists to-day.

Let us take another concrete example of foolish finance—the emoluments of examiners. The work is skilled work; on its efficient performance hangs the reputation and prestige of the University. The University at present gets it admirably done by relying on the loyalty of its employees. For instance, the examiners in "Greats," five in number, are paid each £100 (less income-tax) for three months' arduous and highly technical services. The fee for the examination to the student is two guineas; the average number of examined is, say, 150, which means that the University is £200 out of pocket, and that the money must be made by starving the examiners in the pass-schools, where there is a surplus. Now, the fee for the Civil Service examination, not a whit more important than that of *Literæ Humaniores*, is £5. On that basis the University would not lose a sixpence, and would be able to pay its examiners £150, not one penny more than they deserve. The present system, then, of finance in all the Honour schools, and most of the pass-schools, is bad in principle, unfair in its working, and

cannot last. Common-sense requires that it should be radically altered, and the only obstacle is an antiquated conception that any pay is good enough for purely intellectual work.

Similarly the whole financial relations of the undergraduate to the colleges require drastic amendment. Assuming that his education costs him £200 a-year, analysis shows that at the outside £25 goes towards payment for tuition, in many cases not more than £20 or £21—a quite inadequate sum as compared with what is received. A sound system of finance would do two things: it would raise the tuition fees, and so enable the colleges to pay their staff better; it would by a more efficient domestic administration lower the cost of living, which is absurdly high and wasteful, by at least 20 per cent. The British parent in that case would not pay one farthing more; there would still be left the same desirable opportunities for each undergraduate to learn to cut his cloth according to his purse; and the colleges would be enabled to pay their hard-worked staffs reasonably. Moreover, by reducing the cost of living, numbers of students who at present are debarred from entering the University because they cannot incur the existing minimum charges—students who, as in Scotland, are prepared to undergo every sacrifice in order to secure a university education—would now be able to enter Oxford, to the great gain of the University and themselves.

Tuition fees of £40 a-year would not deter them: it is the cost of living that is an effective hindrance. And if such expenditure is preventable, why is it not prevented?

It would be impossible to close without touching on two more problems of the many that await thrashing out. England enters this year on a new chapter in her educational system. The new machinery created by the bill has been primarily devised to introduce some simplicity, co-ordination, and graduation into a chaos of overlapping areas and conflicting authorities, into a welter of confusion of primary, secondary, and higher education. For the first time a grand trunk staircase from the basement to the upper platforms may now be possible. At the end of that staircase are already placed the spacious saloons of the University. Hitherto those saloons have been largely, if not exclusively, open to the sons of the aristocracy, the sons of the governing and upper middle class; but for a university that aspires to be national and imperial that is not enough. To suggest methods at this point is premature, but the broad features of the new duty imposed by the new age and the new ideals are already clear. Somehow Oxford must convince the nation that she desires to recruit her undergraduates also from the students for whom the grand trunk staircase is mainly being built, and it is she who must tempt them to climb that staircase because of what awaits them at the top. The twentieth century contains no

harder, or more imperative, duty than this. And the future of our race, if we would but act upon our beliefs, rests beyond all controversy on a national determination at all costs to see that not a single brain in the nation is starved or lost. It is no use blinking facts: to-day hundreds of brains are starved, stunted, or lost—Oxford does not command the respect and confidence of more than a section of the nation. But with 1903 Oxford can begin at least to plan and dig the foundations of a university, national as the term has not been understood save in Scotland.

And the second problem is concerned with Science. The opposition between Science and Humanism, which has caused so much ink to flow to so little purpose, has been the creation of men who did not or would not understand what Science and Humanism respectively implied. It is childish to suppose that Oxford can become national or imperial if some of her sons continue to sneer at or hinder the realisation of the irrefragable claims that Science has on every university. An Oxford in which the laboratories are not as important as the schools of *Literæ Humaniores* or of History might be a higher school of letters; it would not be a university or a home of knowledge. Circumstances may prevent Oxford from becoming a great school of engineering or of medical students,—we sin-

cerely hope not,—but nothing ought to prevent her from making herself a place where every kind of scientific research is fostered with pride. There are, happily, many Oxford Humanists who in the Oxford of the future pray to have another Gaisford, another Conington, another Stubbs and Freeman, working side by side with Listers, Edisons, and Kelvins produced by herself,—Humanists who desire to claim beyond contradiction that her schools provide work for all to whom knowledge and truth are the best things that life can impart. So let the work begin then by admitting freely that the liberal education which we do assert it is Oxford's privilege to champion can be derived from the prolegomena of Science as well as from those of letters. The protagonists of Science are not unreasonable; they are rightly confident about the future of their cause: to-day they are ready to meet the Humanists more than half-way if they are encouraged, not bullied. And if the Humanists are wise they will seize the opportunity. Ten years hence it will be too late.

An imperial Oxford! Does that not really mean that what is thought and taught in Oxford will be thought to-morrow in Great Britain and through the Empire? Is that not an ideal worth working for, worth any and every sacrifice that the ideal may ask?

ACADEMICUS.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

ALFRED STEVENS' MONUMENT TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON—AN EMBARRASSED DEAN—THE PROJECT OF A COMMITTEE—THE ROYAL ACADEMY AND ITS ADVOCATE—GOVERNMENTS AS PATRONS—A PUBLISHER OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY—THE CHANGE IN GERMAN SENTIMENT—SIR ALEXANDER BRUCE TULLOCH'S REMINISCENCES.

ALFRED STEVENS, unlucky in his life, is still pursued, long after death, by a demon of ill-luck. A foolish Government, together with an inappreciative Chapter, rendered the completion of his splendid monument to the Duke of Wellington, which is the triumph of modern art, a pinching, grinding hardship. Sums so large were squandered upon unsuccessful competitors, and upon the making of a useless model, that very little was left for the sculptor, who died in the midst of controversy and embarrassment. Nor was it merely money, or its lack, that harassed him. An amiable Dean, a poet, who should have known better, protested against the equestrian statue designed to surmount the canopy. A warrior upon horseback seemed to the Dean an outrage upon his church. He himself would have preferred to see the Iron Duke in the attitude of prayer, like the infant Samuel in the picture-books; and a scrupulous piety was never more oddly coupled with a lack of humour. But the Dean's scruple was respected, and the group of the Duke and his charger was unachieved in bronze at the death of Stevens.

A body of Englishmen is so seldom asked to deal with an artistic masterpiece that we are not surprised at the embarrassment of the Dean and Chapter. And it must be confessed that they proved at every step their lack of grace and judgment. Indeed, no sooner did the monument pass into their hands than they did their best to get rid of it, hiding it away in a side-chapel where it was secure from observation. Now and again a protest was raised against this neglect; now and again it was suggested that the equestrian statue, the model of which remained in the crypt, should be cast in bronze; but protest and suggestion alike fell upon deaf ears. So, for many years, nothing was done, until Lord Leighton made a spirited attempt to remove the disgrace. He appealed to the Government—in vain. He tried to collect money—also in vain. His colleagues of the Academy, now so zealous for the honour of Stevens, were of course more deeply interested in the display of their own works than in the reputation of a sculptor who never exhibited at Burlington House. It is true that one of them was willing to model a fresh group, at a price, while another was pre-

pared to embellish the monument with decoration of his own! But fortunately funds were lacking for these enterprises, and when the monument was shifted to the spot for which Stevens had designed it, the cost of removal was largely defrayed by Lord Leighton himself.

It is clear, therefore, that Stevens and his monument owed little enough to governments or academies, and it is unlikely that anything more would have been done had not his cause been taken up again some three years ago by a body of disinterested enthusiasts. An article in the 'Saturday Review,' a question put to the House of Lords and rebuffed, set before the country their plain and honourable design. They had no axe to grind, no gospel to preach of art or egoism. They merely desired to do honour to neglected genius, to carry out loyally and humbly the wishes of a dead man. Without fuss or advertisement they collected the necessary money, and won the sympathetic approval of the Dean and Chapter, now more happily inspired than heretofore. Their plan was simplicity itself: they had no other purpose than to carry out as faithfully as possible Stevens' own existing model. Now, this model is almost perfect. A hoof has been broken off; the tail is chipped and roughened by time; the edges of the Duke's drapery are frayed. But all these deficiencies (they are neither many nor great) may easily be made good from the sketch, now in

the Kensington Museum, as well as from the artist's own drawings. The task, therefore, which is set to Mr Tweed, the sculptor appointed by the committee, is neither difficult nor hazardous. He is not asked to compose a new work, which shall be in sympathy with Stevens' monument. It is not for him to display his own talent, or his understanding of another's transcendent genius. In fact, he will discharge no higher duty than that of a skilled workman. Under his auspices, we believe, Stevens' equestrian statue will be set up precisely as the artist left it. Were we not confident in this belief, we would protest with what force we might against an over-rash interference. But Mr Tweed is not likely to sacrifice his reputation to a foolish vanity; nor, if he were thus ambitious, would his committee humour him. The limits of his work are clearly defined, and he can only succeed by a devout reverence for the master's work. "The more the appointed sculptor sinks his own individuality"—to quote Mr Thornycroft's wise words—"and leaves the work of Stevens intact, rough though it be, the more he will gain the respect of his fellow-craftsmen, and, no doubt, of the committee which has intrusted the work to him." And if Mr Tweed does not carry out the work to the satisfaction of his fellow-craftsmen and committee, it will assuredly be suppressed.

Here, then, if ever, was an opportunity for sincere co-

operation. All those who wished to see a tardy justice done to Stevens' work might have strengthened the hand of the committee with aid and counsel. But you cannot expect either aid or counsel from the official representatives of British Art. These representatives have, in many a crisis, shown the savage spirit of the dog in the manger. Unwilling to do anything themselves, they are only stirred from inaction by the activity of others. Sir Edward Poynter, for instance, has for some years been in a position (or in two positions) of trust and influence. He was a colleague of Lord Leighton when Lord Leighton interposed on behalf of Stevens' great monument. When he succeeded to Leighton's chair he might have carried on his predecessor's work. But he refrained, and it was not until after Lord Hardwicke had put his question to Lord Salisbury that Sir Edward busied himself in the matter. At last, however, he approached the Government, and at the very moment that he heard of the success of the committee, which had appointed Mr Tweed, he had interested more than one Minister in his project. Not unnaturally he is chagrined that others have forestalled him. He is no doubt the more deeply chagrined because the enterprise is taken out of the hands of the Royal Academy, a private society of which he happens to be president. We can understand his chagrin, even though we cannot sympathise with its motive. But we

cannot profess to feel any sorrow that it was not left to him to carry out the laudable design. We fear the Academicians, though they come with gifts in their hands. We do not forget that Burlington House is the home of "genius"; we are not unmindful of that sculptor who was willing to substitute his design for Stevens' own; and we are convinced that, had Sir Edward Poynter had his way, the great sculptor's own model would have had a very poor chance of reproduction.

But if we distrust Sir Edward Poynter, what shall we say of Mr Spielmann, who fights upon the same side? This gentleman's intrusion is, indeed, the least pleasant part of an argument which, but for him, might have been conducted without acrimony. Now, Mr Spielmann may best be described as the Mr Gosse of the Fine Arts. While Mr Gosse is ready at a moment's notice to support upon his herculean shoulders the dignity of Literature, and fresh from the composition of an article upon Sculpture to declare that a barrister has no right to express an opinion upon letters, Mr Spielmann professes himself the defender of all the crafts which he does not practise. He holds aloft the bauble called "Art" with the same athletic ease wherewith an acrobat at a fair poises an iron bar. But "Art" for him is bounded on this side by our only Comic Journal, on that by the Royal Academy. So he marches through life with the Mahogany Tree in one

hand and Burlington House in the other. He is the maiden-aunt of 'Punch'; the generous protector of the austere Forty. It is not strange, therefore, that, when he first heard of Lord Hardwicke's committee, he was filled with "the worst apprehensions." Since he had not been consulted, he declared that the discussions of that committee were carried on in secret, and he forgot all the while that self-advertisement does not mean candour, and that there is a wide gulf fixed between conspiracy and discretion. But Mr Spielmann's attitude is that of the good dog Tray. He cannot bear to see a hand raised inadvertently against his Academic master, whom he protects with a fidelity rather admirable than wise. Here was a committee, of which he had been told nothing, and upon which not a single Academician had been asked to sit. "Art" was manifestly in danger, and Mr Spielmann was there to protect it, according to his custom. So he majestically and inappositely throws doubt upon Mr Tweed's competence, forgetting that the sculptor will merely be called upon to carry out another's work. But the grounds upon which he objects to the appointment of Mr Tweed are so finely characteristic that they must be enumerated. In the first place, he asks, "What did Mr Rhodes think" of his statue? "What does his family think of it?" We have the greatest respect for both Mr Rhodes and his family, but we should hesitate to take their judgment upon a

matter of sculpture. In the second place, objects Mr Spielmann, Mr Tweed exhibited nothing at Burlington House in 1898, 1899, 1901, and 1902. *Proh pudor!* Is it not clear as day that a man who in four years contributed nothing at all to the exhibition of the Royal Academy, is unfit to superintend the casting in bronze of an artist's work, who never once in a long and glorious career recognised the existence of the Sacred Forty! After these arguments, we need not take Mr Spielmann very seriously. He has had his share of publicity in the 'Times'; and he has faithfully supported the cause of the Academy, which is so near his heart. But while both he and Sir Edward Poynter have exposed the real reason of their displeasure, neither the one nor the other has succeeded in discrediting the committee.

Many things have been said during the discussion about governments and academies, and the part which they should play in artistic enterprise. Now, in the matter of governments we may neglect first principles, and make a confident appeal to history. An ideal government, no doubt, might be intrusted with the delicate task of beautifying its cities with noble buildings and splendid monuments. The French Government is not ideal; yet its Ministry of Fine Arts, supported by a staff of experts and inspectors, has achieved much that is praiseworthy. But the English Government has never been

able to protect the interests of art or artists. A glance at the past will show you that our official enterprises have all failed miserably. What are our Law Courts but an encumbrance to the earth? Is there any citizen who looks with pride upon the Natural History Museum at Kensington? Can any member of our Commons sit in his uncomfortable seat, and declare that the House is conveniently designed for legislation? Remember the hardships which were put upon Alfred Stevens by a harsh Minister. Look at the statues which adorn our open spaces. And then ask yourself if a Government which in the past has committed so many errors, is likely in the future to be more wisely guided. Nor is the reason for our Government's failure difficult to find. A Minister, whose existence depends upon the strength of his party, cannot afford to dissipate his energies upon projects which bring him no votes. He is seldom stirred to action, save by pressure from without; and since the Fine Arts control no seats, and are never likely to turn an election, the wisest Minister is compelled to think lightly of them. It is for this reason, too, that, while the press is efficiently protected, the laws of copyright, unsatisfactory as they are, still await amendment. But we do not complain of a drawback inevitable to our system. It is not the business of politicians to protect the Arts; and until we have a Minister specially appointed for that purpose, and

always fortified by the advice of experts, it is idle to ask statesmen to perform duties for which they are obviously ill-suited. We might as justly exact an opinion upon horse-racing from the bench of bishops.

Nor is the Academy of Arts any better fitted by habit and tradition to protect what should be its special province than the Government. It has had many chances, and neglected them all. It has proved over and over again that it is a private club, bent upon the prosecution of its own advantage, and heedless of all else. Its administration of the Chantrey Bequest is sufficient of itself to disqualify it from interfering in public affairs. We state this simple fact without any displeasure. Indeed, we cannot help cherishing a sort of admiration for the cynicism wherewith the Academicians have studied their own profit. There they are, the Sacred Forty, like so many lotus-eaters, comfortably housed and efficiently protected. Why should they bother about the world of Art which lies beyond their ken? Why should they not lie upon the yellow sand of prosperity and feel the warm breeze of contentment blow upon their happy cheeks? If one of their number did not now and again come out of Piccadilly, and pretend to play the part of an interested patron, we should have no word of blame for them. But they have no right to pronounce a judgment upon sculpture or painting. Finance is their affair, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer chose

to consult them, they could doubtless give him the soundest of advice.

Private enterprise, therefore, is our best support, and the critics, responsible and irresponsible, who have attacked the committee pledged to carry out Alfred Stevens' design, would have been wiser to support that committee than to charge it with ignorance and bad faith. Its task is so simple, that were it so minded it could not bungle it; and when the masterpiece is at last finished, the world, forgetting the peevish objections of Sir Edward Poynter and the pompous rodomontade of Mr Spielmann, will give gratitude where it is due, and will recognise that it owes the completion of our finest monument not to governments nor to academies, but to the public spirit of Mr Maccoll, Lord Hardwicke, and their colleagues.

If evidence were lacking of the indifference wherewith governments contemplate the progress of the arts, it might be sought in Viscount Goschen's interesting biography of his grandfather.¹ For one of the most striking episodes in the German publisher's life was the spirited war which he waged against the pirates. In the eighteenth century the book-pirates of Germany knew neither mercy nor morals. The country, divided into many states, was governed by many and various laws,

and no attempt was made to frame a law of copyright which might be acceptable to all. Although no publisher could live unless he contrived a general sale of his books from one end of the country to another, they were stolen as soon as printed, and the rapid sale of a first edition was his only chance of profit. The Germans, in fact, robbed the fruits of other men's brains with the same cynicism as was practised until the last few years by the publishers of America. Against this practice Goschen set his face with a single-minded energy which did greater credit to his heart than to his head. A little cunning, no doubt, would have profited him vastly. Had he recognised the pirates as honest men, which they were not, he might have come to terms with them. But Goschen would never come to terms with scoundrels. Between him and them was war to the knife, and the publisher of Leipzig put upon his knife the sharpest edge that whetstone could impart. He rarely advertised a book without taking advantage of the publicity thus afforded to strike a blow at his enemies, and so he involved all his clients in his own righteous contest. Here is a specimen of his controversial style to be found in the '*Literatur-Zeitung*' of 1787: "Notice.—Christian Gottlieb Schmieder in Karlsruhe has committed the unparalleled

¹ Georg Joachim Goschen, Publisher and Printer, 1752-1828. By his Grandson, Viscount Goschen. London: John Murray.

villainy of pirating six of my new publications at once. I hereby publicly accuse this man of an unheard-of robbery, and warn every one who has the misfortune to have dealings with him to beware of the rascal. A man without honour or honesty or conscience is dangerous in every relation of life." At another time he would warn the pirate-publisher, "who is outside the pale," that he has taken "carefully considered measures against him." But after one fashion or another he assailed the thief for some ten years, and had the satisfaction at last of seeing his wares protected.

Thus it must always be that the work of a man's brain is the last commodity which a government thinks it useful to protect, and Goschen's biography comes most appositely to our support. But Viscount Goschen's work may be commended upon many grounds. It is a curious chapter in the history of German literature and German manners. It introduces us to Goethe, to Schiller, to Wieland, to all the great writers of prose and verse, who in the eighteenth century shed a lustre upon the Fatherland, and helped to prepare the great movement of romanticism, which presently overwhelmed Europe. It was a time of storm and stress, of high ideals and warm affections. There is not one of the group who could not rise to ecstasy at a moment's notice. The letters which they exchanged are written at the red heat of fever, and even such dross as money

is discussed with more than a flash of the sacred fire. Schiller appears upon the scene of Leipzig in a golden cloud of sentimental glory. He was still at Mannheim, indulging in the wildest Schwärmerei, when Huber and Körner, with their two goddesses, Dora and Minna Stock, invited him to Saxony. At first the quartette jealously guarded their anonymity, but of course they had no intention of blushing and sentimentalising unknown, and their secret was speedily divulged by themselves. Körner's first letter is a high-flown pæan to youth and poetry. It is easy to see that it sprang from the heart, and the crustiest countenance could not contemplate it without a kind of effervescence. "At a time when Art is more and more condescending to play the part of the mercenary slave to rich and mighty voluptuaries"—such is his overture—"it does the heart good when a great man appears, and shows what mankind is able to achieve. The better part of mankind, sick with disgust at the age in which it lives, in the thick of degenerate creatures, languishes for greatness, quenches its thirst, and feels an inward lifting power which raises it above its contemporaries, and influences which strengthen it on its weary course towards a worthy goal. . . . This is the reason why I have joined three other persons who are worthy to read your works, in order to thank you and to render you homage." What must have been the feelings of a young poet, who received such a document penned

by an unknown hand? And it did more than write—this ecstatic quartette. Körner set one of Schiller's songs to music, "as a test whether I have understood you"; Minna worked him a pocket-book; while Dora sketched the four colleagues for his edification. How could Schiller resist the call? Nothing but the lack of 300 thalers barred the road which might lead him to his friends, and no sooner had Goschen found the money than he shook the dust of Mannheim from his feet, put the publisher's daughter from his heart, and hastened to receive the homage of his devout admirers.

Such is the strain in which the early part of the book is composed. They are all sentimental—poets and publisher alike. Only Goethe, already Olympian, keeps himself apart, never forgetting, even in the moment of inspiration, the necessity of being well paid. His correspondence with Goschen is the least pleasant of all. His eye is always upon the main chance, and not even Goschen's losses melt him to compassion. The publisher, truly, is the strangest of his class. Poor as he was at the commencement, he frankly confesses that he cares nothing about taste or fashion. He is desperately interested in what he believes to be the best literature, and he is always prepared to sacrifice an immediate profit to future glory. In sentiment, meanwhile, he yields to none of them. His love-letters might have been written by Körner, or even by the great Schiller

himself. "My dearest Jette," he exclaims, "I have not yet seen you to-day! I am kept from you till to-morrow! It is ten minutes past four. Would that this minute might carry you a thought of me! Why, dear Jette, can I not forget you, neither in this business-room nor in my solitary home, neither in my walks nor in society, neither morning nor night? Why do I see or seek you everywhere? Hasten, beloved one! hasten to my arms, and let my soul fly across my lips to thine." In such terms did Goschen address his beloved, and it is hard to believe that he and his friends lived in the country which to-day we call Germany. No more eloquent commentary upon the change which the Fatherland has undergone could be found than Viscount Goschen's book. We cannot believe that the young German poets of to-day address each other in terms of rapture. The romance which tingled Schiller's blood is dead, like the romance of the Rhine, whose shadowy castles are dwarfed by chimneys, and shaken every minute by lumbering trains. Indeed, there can be no room for literature in a country whose destinies are controlled by William II. We do not mean that the Emperor is not a generous patron of letters. But imperial in all things, he makes a reputation at a word, and asks the world to believe that Wildenbruch (for instance) is a man of genius, because William II. says he is. So he runs up a brand-new

building, and assures a credulous country that it is a Roman ruin. So he founds a school of painting, and is his own musician. But in this system there is no place for the ancient sentiment. There are no Minnas and Doras now in the Fatherland working pocket-books and painting little pictures for poets whom they have never seen. No; Germany has sacrificed much to her industries, to her ambition of making an empire on the sea. And we revert with pleasure to the romantic era in which poets sang and publishers wrote love-letters, and all things seemed as they were before the Flood.

Of Goschen's literary enterprises his grandson writes with justice and discrimination. There is scarce a chapter without its separate interest, and since a history of publishing is in a sense a history of literature, the book has a value even for the serious student. Here, for instance, is told the strange story of the 'Neveu de Rameau,' that masterpiece by Diderot, which first saw the light of print in Goethe's translation, and of which the French original was instantly lost. Indeed, the first French edition was but a retranslation of Goethe's German, and, though Diderot's own copy was afterwards recovered, the mystery long remained unpierced. Nor among Goschen's many enterprises must we forget the admirable edition of Homer, a masterpiece of accurate typography. Though he did not make a vast fortune, he succeeded in all his undertakings, if success be

computed not in money but in literature; and Viscount Goschen could not more wisely have spent the leisure which he has snatched from the more serious business of politics than in the composition of his grandfather's amiable and interesting biography.

A notable contrast to Viscount Goschen's book is Major-General Sir Alexander Bruce Tulloch's 'Recollections of Forty Years' Service' (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood & Sons). In Sir Alexander Tulloch's stirring pages there is little either of sentiment or poetry. For Sir Alexander has lived a life of adventure ever since, in 1852, he became a military cadet. He has seen service all the world over; he has been an instructor; he has done admirable work for the Intelligence Department; and never has he lost a chance of distinguishing himself. One's first impression on reading this lively and interesting book is that Sir Alexander is a many-sided man, to whom nothing comes amiss. From the very first he was observing and learning, and he saw nothing, he learned nothing, that he did not presently turn to the best account. For instance, on his first voyage out to India, in which, of course, he rounded the Cape, he picked up something of navigation, and was thus able, on arriving at his destination, to save his ship from running ashore. Thus his alert mind was quick to receive new impressions, and to shape theory into practice in the briefest possible time. Thus,

also, he never forgot he was a soldier, and though he found every kind of sport irresistible, he remembered that fishing and shooting were often the best excuse for acquiring military information. As we have said, he entered Sandhurst in 1852, and the cadets of these days led a life of Spartan simplicity. "The rooms," he says, "were not comfortable, the floor being sanded and the door locked wide open during the day. There were not even strips of carpet by the sides of the beds, and such luxuries as slippers were unknown." The food was no better than the rooms. "Dinner consisted," he writes, "of a leg or shoulder of mutton for each table of ten cadets, with an unlimited supply of waxy potatoes in their skins, and as much bread and small beer as was wanted. The five seniors at the top of the table generally managed to get a good feed of mutton, but the mangled remains left by the boy-carver which came to the juniors were not particularly appetising." However, Sir Alexander does not complain. Even if the fare was bad, and the punishment excessive, the cadets were well taught; and when, in 1854, he was gazetted to the Royals, and sent to the Crimea, he already knew something of his profession.

In Russia, however, he saw but little fighting. The French, says he, had had enough of it, and peace was declared, to the utter disgust of the English, whose army was "fit for anything," and who were keenly looking forward to a campaign in Asia Minor. But Sir Alex-

ander was not long idle. He had been home but a short while when his regiment was ordered to India, to aid in quelling the Mutiny; and no sooner was the Mutiny suppressed than he set out for China. Indeed, the best chapters of his book are those which deal with the Chinese War. Of the Chinese he has a high appreciation. He admires their extraordinary gifts, and he understands their many good qualities. "From my personal observations," says he, "living, as I did, among the Chinese for nearly a year, I consider it my simple duty to state my own experiences, and to say that I believe that Europeans who behaved themselves properly, and did not offensively push their own religion, or interfere in political matters, could live in China, and would be welcomed by the ordinary traders and peasants." So, too, he thinks highly of the Chinese soldiers. Though they were "always beaten by European troops, they proved themselves invincible when properly trained, as Gordon trained them, and nobody dare reflect upon their courage." Even the ordinary Canton coolie is steady under fire; and it is only when he considers the governing class that Sir Alexander expresses his disgust. "For ignorance, conceit, and general unfitness for a responsible position," says he, "few human beings can come up to the ordinary Chinese mandarin," and he had evidence in full of their cruelty and oppression.

Probably Sir Alexander never did better work than for the In-

telligence Department, for which he surveyed Belgium, Egypt, Crete, and much of England. It was the direct and well-merited result of his excellent work in Egypt that, when the massacre at Alexandria took place, he was attached for special duty with Sir Beauchamp Seymour. The world then, he tells us, did not contain a happier individual than himself; and in a work of remarkably sustained interest there are no pages more absorbing than those which describe the bombardment, the author's adventurous share in the subsequent operations, and his chance association with "a tall thin subaltern of Engineers named Kitchener."

"One morning when I was engaged writing on board the *Invincible*, a tall thin subaltern of Engineers named Kitchener came to see me: he had got a few days' leave from his general at Cyprus, and as he could speak Arabic, had come to see if he could be of any use to me. 'Certainly,' I replied; 'I hope you will be able to stay with me.' . . .

"The following day a letter arrived from the adjutant-general, Sir Garnet, about the possibility, or rather impossibility, of an advance from Alexandria *via* the Nile to Cairo, if a land campaign were necessary. Some one at headquarters still fancied that route. . . . I decided to go up the line in disguise. The admiral did not at all like the risk of my doing so, but I said I considered it a matter of duty, so arranged to slip into the Suez train with the mail passengers next afternoon, got up as a Levantine official. I did not like cutting off my naval beard, and rather amused K. by saying, as I brushed it out before clipping it for shaving: 'Well, K., I wonder if this also'—pointing to my throat—'will be cut to-day.' In the morning I had been with our politicals in their room in the town in my usual

dress: in the afternoon, before starting, I walked into their room again. The first exclamation was, 'What on earth does this confounded Gippy want in here?' It was some time before I was recognised, so I thought my disguise would do. As I had just had two special warnings they were on the watch for me on shore, I had to be careful. When a reconnaissance has to be made, there should always be at least two, to give a chance of one getting back with the required information; so K. went with me in the same train. He, like the rest of the passengers, was safe enough, but I knew that if recognised I should not get far. Arrived at Kaffir Zyat, I made out that I was suddenly so overcome with a painful complaint I must return for special medical advice to Alexandria; but when K., who remained to help the invalid, inquired about the exact time our train would leave, it was decidedly unpleasant to find that our expected return train had been taken off, and that there was but one more train to come that evening. It was the last run by the European administration, and brought the few remaining English from Cairo. . . . When the train came in I saw one of the Europeans recognised me, but a quick sign was sufficient. The invalid and his companion had a carriage to themselves.

"Arabi's people soon heard about my little trip. Seven days afterwards a fair-complexioned Syrian was noticed in the train at Kaffir Zyat: he was taken out of the train under the impression that he was a European doing my work, and his throat cut on the platform. I doubt if Sir G. ever knew the risk I ran to get and wire him the information he required.

"Soon after daybreak a boat with three Egyptian officers, who said they had been all night looking for us, came alongside with another proposition from Arabi, which was so absurd that they were politely told to return. The inside of our battery, with the blue-jackets stripped to the waist and ready for action, was a fine sight. The bridge was barricaded with hammocks, and here the admiral, captain, and flag-lieutenant took up their position. There I could be of no use

so suggested I should go into the main-top, where I would be able to see over the smoke and give the ranges. There was a 1-inch Nordenfeldt on the top under a midshipman named Hardy: we had no plates or hammocks to protect us, so had a clear uninterrupted view. I was amused to find two ex-naval friends in the top, lying down comfortably behind the mast: they had managed to get quietly on board. I should mention that K.'s general at Cyprus telegraphed more than once for me to send him back. I replied that I could not spare him, but on the 9th or 10th, as soon as I saw the screw of the passenger steamer which should have taken him back, begin to turn, I wired, 'Finished with K. He has been very useful, but can now return.' K. in plain clothes I could not take officially, but it was arranged he should get on board and keep out of sight. . . .

"The enemy's gunners, considering the tremendous fire we poured into the Mex fort, made uncommonly good shooting, our water-line being apparently their special target. Placed as I was, I could see their projectiles strike the water some yards off, and then shoot along under the surface; but by the time they touched the ship their force was gone. During the four hours we were under fire we were only hulled about thirty times, and but one plate was started. Having abnormally good sight, I often noticed the enemy's shot coming towards us, just like cricket-balls. My companion in the top, Hardy,—now, alas! with the majority,—not having been under fire before, bobbed occasionally when the shot came close. I began chaffing him, when a thing like a railway train rushed past. He had then the laugh on his side. I could not help staggering back: it must have been a shell from one of the 18-ton guns, and very close to us, as it cut the signal-halliards. . . . Suddenly a large spherical shell came through the bulwarks, struck a bollard or staunchion, and spun round on the

deck. At once the men by the foremost gun saw what it was, and called out to me, 'It's a shell.' Without thinking what I was doing, I craned over the rail to see if the beast was fizzing. Fortunately the rap on the staunchion or bollard had knocked the fuse out, but it was a nasty thing to have on the deck, so I called to the gun's crew near it, 'Pitch the damned thing overboard!' and one of the blue-jackets picked it up and trundled it down the ash-shoot into the sea. It was wonderful to see how well the Gippies stuck to their guns: more than once I saw one of our shells go square and fair into an embrasure. 'That gun is finished,' I thought. Not a bit of it! back came an answer in due course. The answer was so quick in one case that I could not help jumping on to the top-rail and holding on with one hand to a stay, giving a cheer, 'Well done, Gippy!' much to the amusement of my friends on the deck below."

In Sir Alexander Tulloch's book we have an admirable record of the life of a hard-working soldier, and it is well for those who are ever declaiming against the luxury and laziness of the military profession to study these reminiscences of industry and active service. When Sir Alexander was first gazetted to the Royals he had fifty pounds a-year, and in a career of nearly half a century he has known few idle days. And we know no better book than his to commend to those easy critics who cheerfully assert that hard work is discouraged in the army, and that the soldier only succeeds if he shows himself studiously indifferent to his profession.

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THE AFFAIR AT THE GREEN RIVER MINE.

THE shadow of the steep rocky hill was spreading down the lower slopes and across the valley; the long tropical day was nearing its close. A man appeared in the doorway of the three-roomed iron-roofed house that stood on a platform sliced in the hillside. He stood a moment looking out, then crossed the platform and mounted a path that led to the top of a great mound. From the outer edge of the mound he could see some two-thirds of a mile up the valley, where a narrow track, little used, and in many places scarcely distinguishable, wound along the flat among scattered trees. He seated himself on a pile of wooden sleepers and lit his pipe.

He was a tall, active fellow of seven- or eight-and-twenty, long-armed, loose-jointed, and

lean in the flank, a typical Australian in build. His small neat features and birdlike eyes were somewhat oddly matched with a bush of long black hair and a heavy beard of dark brown. He was dressed, neatly enough according to Bush notions, in a clean cotton singlet and moleskin trousers. His name was George Hansen. He had been working as a miner in the Green River Copper-Mine until the enterprise was abandoned, and had then, upon a thrifty impulse, accepted the post of caretaker. For nine months he had lived at the deserted mine, and it was now nearly four since he had spoken with a white man. The police trooper from Caroline River, ninety miles away, had been his last visitor, and now another patrol was about due. But, whether or no, it was the lonely

nan's habit to look out along the track of an evening, persuading himself that some one was coming, and sometimes causing his eyes and ears to share, though but momentarily, in the delusion.

The place of his observatory was upon the "dump," a truncated heap of mineral refuse, semicircular in form, which projected from the hillside, its flat top level with the opening of the tunnel that formed the entrance to the mine. Lines of miniature railway traversed it, and upon a timber staging lay a pile of ore ready to be bagged and carted away.

The track, widened into a road passable for waggon, led past the mine and down the valley towards the river some eight miles away. Standing here and there, without regular arrangement, were the thatched huts of the miners, and a larger building, which had been a mess-house. Near the foot of the dump was the blacksmith's shop, with its forge and anvils, and tools lying about in confusion. The open doors and bare, silent interiors told plainly the story of desertion and failure. There was a small deep pool of clear water near the track, and beside this the traces of fires and of rude shelters made with boughs showed where natives had been encamped.

The cool draught that heralded the sunset was stirring the leaves and bark-streamers of the eucalypti when Hansen knocked out his pipe, rose, stretched himself, and turned to enter the house and prepare

his supper. His dog, an unobtrusive animal not belonging to any recognised breed, which had been left behind, lame, by the last mob of blacks, uttered an arrestive bark.

"What is it, Smiler, old man?" said Hansen. "Bandicoot? Snake? No one coming to-night, Smiler."

But Smiler barked again, and, ears erect, limped a little way down the slope and stood gazing towards the track. Hansen's straining eyes now perceived a movement in the gathering dusk, and soon he heard the tramp of horses on the stony flat. In a few minutes there rode up, followed by a mounted black-boy driving a pack-horse, a man, who dismounted and briefly introduced himself—

"Good evening. My name's Barton. Just taking a look at the country. I think I'll camp here."

By the laws of Bush etiquette an invitation was scarcely needed, but Hansen, who fairly trembled with pleasure, led the way to the house and asked the stranger to share his evening meal. The horses were unsaddled, the hobbles unslung from their necks and buckled on their fetlocks, and in half an hour the white men were chatting over their supper by the light of two candles.

Barton was an athletic, good-looking man, a year or two younger than his host. His last regular employment had been that of a custom-house officer at Port Daly. Upon the strength of a small legacy he had thrown up his appoint-

ment, purchased three horses and a travelling outfit, and was now on his way overland to some western goldfields. Green River was far from being on the direct route, but his time was his own, and he had a fancy to see what a copper-mine was like. "Taking a look at the country" is, besides, recognised in Australia as a legitimate excuse for almost any amount of the wandering by which men seek to satisfy the nomad in their blood.

These particulars, or some of them, were communicated to Hansen as they sat at meat. When they had finished, Harry the black-boy cleared away and disposed of the remnants while they sat outside smoking and enjoying the coolness of the evening. Hansen talked about the mine.

"Copper? Oh yes, there's plenty copper in the old mine, I reckon. The tunnel goes in, level, about four hundred. From there we sunk about a hundred and twenty, and struck the lode. We was drivin' to the east, all hands workin' full time, and twenty niggers, or as many as we could get, helping to bag the stuff. Cap'n Ryan was as pleased as Punch. The jokers from Moonta and Wallaroo thought they was here for life on ten bob a-day. Some of 'em talked about sending for their wives and kids. The Old Man did send for some more of his cousins and nephews, I believe."

"Well, what's wrong, then?" asked Barton, who was unlearned in the intricacies of mine-working.

"I'm tellin' you. The *Katie* was comin' up the river once a fortnight then, bringing stores and loadin' up with copper. Davy Mack with his team was doing the carting. A fine soft contrack he had, too — good road, feed for the bullocks, plenty niggers to help yoke up, and never a hand's turn to do at the loadin', unless he wanted. Well, one night the *Katie* was at the landing before her time. It was blowin' a bit from the north, and the blacks never heard her whistle. (You'd hardly believe it, but most times they used to hear it when she got to the bend, though it's a long nine mile from here, and I never could hear it myself.) I was out here yarning with young Bill Ryan; Cap'n Ryan was in that chair smokin' his cigar (he always cut it pretty fat, the Old Man did), and he was just goin' down as usual to have a look at the night-shift, when we heard the dogs singin' out down there at the camp, and presently a blackfeller comes up with a letter in the split of a bamboo. The Old Man puts on his specs, and takes it inside to read. I said good night, and was just going away to turn in when I hears such a bloomin' shindy, I thought some one was havin' a fit. I reckon the Old Man pretty nigh stamped holes in them boards. And talk about cursin'! Well, I've heard a few good 'uns, and I'm reckoned pretty fair myself on a pinch, but I tell you I was fair shocked."

Hansen paused to relight his pipe. The sociable creature

was fond of telling a story, and his solitary life made a listener precious to him. He had, too, the lonely man's memory, and the shortening of his pleasure by omitting the unessential was an idea that never entered his head.

"What was the matter?" asked Barton.

"Matter? Blow me if I know. The Old Man bawls out, 'Willum 'Enry!' (that was young Bill, his son, who kep' the books), and Bill goes in, and they slammed the door, and I dunno what they said. All I know is, the work was stopped that night, and next morning everybody on the place got the sack, except these Cousin Jacks who were brought up here from South on an agreement. There was a good lump of ore at grass, a bit more than a full load for the waggon. Davy Mack took the one load down to the steamer. I dunno what he heard there, but when he came back he reckoned the Company'd gone bung, and he wouldn't take the rest of the copper, nor yet the stores, for fear he wouldn't get paid. Him and the Old Man had a rare turn-to about it. 'I'll give you my cheque, Davy,' says he. 'Na, na, Captain,' says Davy; 'A'll no tak' yer cheque. Ye'll mebbe be wantin' it,' he says. The Old Man was ropeable;¹

he reckoned he'd take Davy to court for breach of contract, but it was no go, old Davy wouldn't budge. He'd do no more for the Company, he'd see 'em in hell first, he said; but he took all the men's dunnage down to the *Katie* for nothing. All but the Chinamen's, I mean, of course. There was three Chinkies, cooks. They humped their swags. The Old Man and Bill drove down in the buggy.

"Well, there was a lot of stores and things left behind, and anyway the Old Man couldn't bear to leave the place with no one in charge, so he asked me to stay on. Full pay, of course. He said he'd see me through, and anyway, it was my belief the Company had a few notes² left, so I chanced it, and I been here ever since. I don't know what's happened to the Company, but a nigger comes through every month or so with a mail for the Mission Station over the river, and MacIntyre—that's the agent in Peddlin'ton—writes to me and sends me the bank receipt for my few quid, so I'm satisfied."

"How d'you get on for grub?" Barton asked. The supper had been excellent.

"Oh, I've got a soft thing on in that line. There was about two ton of flour left behind,

¹ When, from the animal's unwillingness, it is necessary to "rope" and throw a horse or a bullock in order to handle it, the animal is said to be "ropeable"; hence the word is used to describe violent anger in a man. The termination "able" is used in this perverted sense in another Australian word. To say of a river that it is "swimmable" means, not that it is capable of being crossed by swimming, but that it cannot be crossed *without* swimming.

² *I.e.*, pounds—£1 notes being the common form of currency.

and besides that the Old Man had laid in stacks of fancy tinned stuff, jam and butter and fish and all that. There's tea and sugar, and of course there's plenty candles on a mine. I just help myself, and send a list to MacIntyre. He ain't particular. When the blacks are here I get game,—turkey and kangaroo, and a bit of fresh fish now and then. They've cleared out now because the bacca was gettin' low, and I stopped givin' 'em any. I reckon that mob has crossed the river to be Christians for a bit, until I get some more bacca. Anyhow, they'll come back when the grass gets burnable, so they can drive the game."

Hansen slept on a cot in the inner room. Barton spread his blankets on the floor of the little verandah, and his bush mosquito-net of brown cheesecloth between a post and the office table. Hansen promised to show him the mine next day.

In the morning Barton asked how Hansen managed to pass the time, having no work to do. The caretaker made it clear that he had not been idle.

"See that heap of unbagged stuff," said he as the two reached the top of the dump. "I got that out myself, just to kill time and to get enough tiredness to make me sleep of a night. Mined it in the face of the lode, wheeled it in a barrow to the bottom (the blacks wouldn't go down the shaft), and made a nigger haul it up in a green-hide bucket,

and load it on the trolley and run it out here. I'd have bagged it, too, only I had no bags nor twine. Look at it. There's about eleven ton there. Runs about forty per cent of copper, that does. When the rain came, the shaft filled up. The donkey's there, but out of gear and laid up in oil. Some day, p'raps, I'll get steam on her and pump that water out."

So saying, he led the way from the dump into the tunnel. Each holding a lighted candle, and stooping to avoid the low irregular roof, they stepped along the sleepers between the little rails. "See that?" said Hansen, pointing to a sort of benched alcove cut in the wall. "The Old Man had that made for himself. Used to lay there for a banj of a hot afternoon, if the trollies weren't runnin'. Fine cool place, when a couple of niggers were turnin' the rotary outside. Oh, Cap'n Ryan could do things up to the knocker, my oath he could."

The air of the tunnel, Barton noticed, was not foul or oppressive, though now stagnant. He saw the reason of this when they reached the end, for above the mouth of the shaft appeared the opening of another, and by craning over and looking upward he could even see a spark of daylight which filtered down from the outlet, high on the steep hillside. Near the mouth of the shaft stood the steam-pump, the donkey, daubed with the white grease-paint used for machinery out of commission. The shaft was full to the lip with water.

"That's all there is to see

inside," said Hansen. "Not much, is it? Unless you like to climb up that bloomin' chimney. If you'd come in the dry season I could have shown you round down below."

They returned to the entrance of the tunnel, and sat down on an overturned trolley just outside the arch. A cutting in the steepness of the hill ran between high banks for a few paces to the dump, where the banks diminished to nothing.

"You'd hardly believe it, but that shaft filled up in about three days when the rain started. I reckon some underground spring must have broke into the drive. Funny thing, I never thought about it—about water comin', I mean. Me and Jim—that was a boy I had—was workin' pretty regular, but I got a touch of ague, and took a couple of days off. When we got to the top of the shaft nex' day, Jim reckoned there was something wrong,—smelt it, seemin'ly. He never went below himself. He sort of sniffs, and says to me, 'No go, George,' he says; 'you no go; I think it water come on longa mine.' He was a pretty level-headed nigger, though timid. I took no notice, and started down the ladder. I suppose I was down about eighty foot, when my leg dropped into cold water. I come up again pretty quick. Next day Jim and I went in to have a look, and there she was, pretty nigh full-up.

"We got a scare that day, too," continued Hansen, laughing at the recollection. "At least Jim did, and he never

went inside again, and I won't say but what I was a bit scared at first go-off myself. We was just comin' away from the shaft, had our backs to it, when there comes a most tremendous splash in the water. Jim lets one yell out of him, drops his candle, and hooks it in the dark. I went a few yards myself pretty smart, then I knocks my head agin the rock, so I stops and goes back. 'There's no one but me in this bloomin' mine,' I says to myself, firm-like. 'Anyway,' I says, 'if it is the devil, I'm goin' to see the beggar!' Well, I went back to the shaft, and there was one of them big sleepers floatin'. I knew in a second what was up. The water had worked the sleeper loose right down near the bottom, and it shot up like a cork a hundred and twenty feet, and flew out of the water for p'raps ten foot of a jump, and then fell back."

"Talking of blacks," said Barton presently, "d'you ever have any trouble with them here?"

"No," replied Hansen, "I've never had none. I used to think about 'em a bit on the dark nights, me all alone and whips of tucker and 'bacca in the storeroom. But I got used to it. I know most of the mobs that come about here; there was so many workin' here when the mine was in full swing. They know I'll always give tucker and 'bacca when I've got it to spare, for carryin' water and washin' and such-like jobs. I'm no Combo, but I get on all right with blacks,

as a rule. They know I can shoot pretty straight, too; the Old Man made me a present of his Colt's rifle when he went South; it's a gun you can drive nails with, and they've seen me breakin' bottles at seventy yards. There's only one black-feller in the country I ever felt real scared of, and that's Long Charley, him that was in jail for the murders here three years ago."

"Yes," said Barton, who knew that story of administrative stupidity and judicial failure; "I suppose he's a dangerous chap."

"It's a fact, he is. But there's old scores between me and him, too. It was me that arrested the beggar. I was doin' rouseabout at the Flora Cattle Station when the murders happened, and I went out with the police party. The police was new chums, most of 'em; anyway, they couldn't get into the same paddick with Charley, and if they had they wouldn't have known him. It's a long yarn; the end of it is, though I think arrestin' blacks is foolishness, I got him aboard the *Katie* and in irons. Well, he was convicted right enough; but the Government found they couldn't hang him (of course he reckoned they was afraid to), so he had a month or two of regular meals in Port Daly, and then they turned him loose. He had a good enough time, but it didn't make him fond of me, not likely. Then he came to work here, and I hammered him for throwing a spear and a fire-stick at a kangaroo-dog I had. Stood up to me like a white man, he

did; I downed him, bunged up both his eyes, and knocked his head through a bark wall. He was near doin' for me with a kick in the stomach. When he could see he went and told the Cap'n. He always sucked up to the Old Man, and the Old Man liked him because he talked good English, and there's no denyin' he was a handy cove about the place; he can work when he likes. The Old Man was just up from South then. He starts talkin' like a book about breakin' the law, and British subjects, and that, so I up and told him all I knew about the murders, and a bit more I didn't know but thought likely. 'Fore I was finished the Cap'n gets up and jumps for the rifle; Bill had to remind him he was a J.P., but Charley didn't wait: I reckon he was half-ways to the river before Bill and I had done extractin' the cartridges. The Cap'n was a white man all right, though religious. He wasn't no missionary, and Mister Charley had savvy enough to go wide of him. He's never been near this place since; knocks around Peddlin'-ton and Fir Creek mostly, I believe, thievin' and loafin' on the Chinkies for opium and drink. But there's no doubt he's got a derry on me, and I expect him or me'll get spragged next journey. If it's his call, I won't say but what it mightn't be me. But the third time's lucky, they say. His lubra was here three or four weeks ago with a mob; Emma her name is, a tall, ugly, slab-sided piece with a wall-eye. He'd been hammerin' her as usual

(she had the marks), and she reckoned she'd never make it up with him again. All gammon, of course; they're just 'all same whitefeller Mary' for a chap who licks 'em. Well, maybe he sent her with the message; anyway, she says to me, 'You good feller, George, me like you too much. Charley, him no good. Him say, By-'m-by killem you; you look out.'

"Rum thing, me tellin' you this just here," went on Hansen, after a pause. "This is the very place where I always think the niggers could get me, easy, if they wanted to. When I'm inside, I mean. See? A joker gets up there, just above the arch, and waits for me to come out; waits half a day, p'raps. Out I comes, I've got my back to him and I'm below him. Lump o' rock, or spear, no matter which, it'd be Cooper's ducks with me, wouldn't it?"

When Harry the black-boy brought up Barton's horses in the late afternoon, it was found that Barton's own riding-horse had cut one of his fetlocks rather badly, with a broken bottle or sharp rock. The animal was dead lame, and would not be fit to travel for some days. Hansen, a handy fellow in any sort of Bush emergency, helped to do all that could be done in the way of treatment. The two men liked each other, and Barton was not unwilling to prolong his stay. With some difficulty he persuaded Hansen to consent to his paying for his food, as well as for a few stores for the onward journey.

They went out shooting, and

a kangaroo and two turkeys fell to the famous rifle, while Barton's gun brought down some teal. The kangaroo of the tropical north is not big and coarse-fleshed like his southern congener, and Hansen's cookery was not the least admirable of his many dexterities. They soon became friends. Barton was frank and easy-going; he had the gift of liking. An Englishman, he had none of the characteristics of the new chum, which prick colonial touchiness, and arouse a just resentment that at moments may become almost frenzied. Hansen loved music, and Barton had a passable voice and an amazing memory for the songs of the music-hall and the comic opera. Above all, he was an admirable listener, a quality that went straight to the heart of a man by nature garrulous, who would have "yarned" to one blind, dumb, and indifferent sooner than sit mumchance.

Hansen had something of an ear, and could pick up a chorus. But it was in anecdote he chiefly shone, and his muse was the Humorous. The fellow was a born mime. He could talk broad Scots, or with a Kerry brogue. He had worked among German farmers in the south, and could render their English speech with accuracy and point. Born in a southern seaport, he could mimic the talk of seafarers of all the maritime nations. A dialogue between a Cornish miner and a black-fellow was one of his triumphs.

He owed some of these facilities to his descent. His father,

a Swede, had been a sailmaker, and had settled, after many voyages, in Adelaide. His mother was born in the Colony, the child of a Scotsman and an Irishwoman. The former "was corp'ral of the twenty-sixth Scotch Cameronians" (such was his version) "and fought in that Mut'ny in India, when they roped the niggers and tied 'em on the guns, and blew 'em all over the paddick." An aged cousin of his mother's, glamorously supposed to have been a transported rebel, had also played a part in the amusive comedy of George's boyhood. This veteran had been a roaring blade in his youth, and had followed the hounds in Kerry: "An' away we wint, leppin' hedges an' dykes, over ditches an' pikes, an' the divil a hwhip wud we have but a sally birch." George himself had been a waggoner, a railway-guard, a "bush carpenter," a shearer, a boundary-rider, a rouseabout on sheep and cattle stations, and a miner.

And so, in that solitary place, between the iron hillside and the melancholy drooping trees, among the vacant carcasses of homes, the echoes, so long untroubled, rang, in the moonlit hours, to the merry choruses of Offenbach and Sullivan, or the sudden shouts of Barton's jolly laughter, till Harry the black-boy raised his head from his blankets by the cook-house door, to marvel vaguely at the white men's mirth.

On the fourth day a storm of rain, the last of the season, drove up the valley and kept

them indoors. The gusty rattle on the iron roof made conversation difficult, and it was partly on this account that Barton cast about him for something to read. Hansen's private library consisted of an illustrated 'Nicholas Nickleby,' of which a third of the pages were missing, and a copy of that somewhat dreary *jeu d'esprit*, 'Valentine Vox.' Rummaging in the storeroom, he opened for Barton's benefit an ancient green sea-chest having rope grummetts and the name T. R. Williams painted on the lid. Herein, above a score or so of glass jars containing acids and solutions, was a stratum of books. The titles struck Barton by their incongruity, and having a fancy for the quaint, he made a list, which I afterwards had an opportunity of seeing. Here it is:—

Student's Elements of Geology. By Sir Charles Lyell. Illustrated. A handsome volume.

Roscoe's Elements of Chemistry. Practical Mineralogy, Mining, and Assaying. By O. Schwob. Illustrated in colours.

A Manual of Freemasonry.

Gespräche über Reiterei. Von Kraft, Prinz zu Hohenlohe Ingelfingen.

MS. notes in English. Bookseller's mark, Düsseldorf.

Misadventures of John Nicholson. By R. L. Stevenson. American paper-covered edition. Bookseller's mark, Oakland, Cal.

Boswell's Johnson. Nobly bound, and emblazoned with the arms of a school. Much worn.

Military and other Problems of South Africa. Anonymous. Marked on the flyleaf, "T. R. W., from the Author, —sdorp (name illegible), 1889."

An odd volume of Browning, containing "Blougram's Apology."

Barriers Burned Away. By the Rev. E. P. Roe.
 An odd volume of Carlyle's French Revolution.
 Vanity Fair.
 Heine's Reisebilder, in the original.
 Manon Lescaut, Huysman's *Là Bas*, and *Le Père Goriot*, in the original.
 A Study of the Amphioxus, author's name not noted.

I am sorry to say that I do not know what the Amphioxus is, and Barton, it appears, was not moved to investigate. He whiled away some hours, dipping into this collection, while the rain roared on the roof, leaves and pieces of bark flew like scared birds up the valley, and his companion frowned and muttered over games of Patience with a pack of hoary cards.

The storm passed before sunset, and they moved into the verandah. Little streams were making a pleasant noise about the hillside. The smooth white tree-trunks gleamed with moisture; gold and scarlet rays shot up the sky.

Barton asked who was the owner of the books.

"They belonged to a chap named Tom Williams," said Hansen. "He's dead. He was workin' on the mine when it shut down, and stayed behind here for a bit. He went down to Peddlin'ton about a fortnight after the others, and left them chemicals here, and the chest. He took sick, and died in the hospital. He was a mate of mine, and the doctor wrote and told me. Tom said he had no friends in Australia, and he wanted me to have what he left here. The chemicals was on the table in the

back-room, and one day my boy Jim thought they was medicine or drink, I suppose, and got tasin'. He pretty near died, so I didn't belt him; but I thought I better put 'em away, so I shut 'em up in Tom's chest, along o' them books."

"What did he do with the chemicals?" asked Barton.

"Oh, used to go prospectin' o' Sundays, and tryin' experiments on bits of stone and stuff that he found. He was a scholar, Tom was; had a good headpiece, too, and I reckon he knew as much about scientific mining as what the Cap'n did—p'raps more. He'd been mining in New Zealand and South Africa. He'd been a sailor, too, and a soldier, I believe."

After supper, Hansen had bursts of silence so unusual with him that Barton began to think he must be unwell. He was going to propose a game of cribbage, when the other suddenly addressed him.

"Look here, Mr Barton——"

"Jack," said Barton.

"All right, sir—Jack. I'm going to tell you something. It's got a good deal to do with poor old Tom. You're a white man, and I reckon you're a gentleman. Maybe, you're as good a scholar as him. I'm a Bushman, and I never had no education, not what you would call so. I want your advice."

"Fire away, George," said Barton. "What is it? Thinking of getting married? Going to start a new pub. in Port Daly?"

"It's like this," began Hansen. "I told you Tom Williams was my mate. Him

and me used to live yonder, in that little hut with the bark roof patched with kerosene-tins. You know what these Cousin Jacks are like. No? Well, I dunno if they're all the same, but the mob we had here was that ignorant, you wouldn't believe. And clannish! Well, it was near comin' to a shindy because Tom and me and a couple of other chaps that wasn't Cornish had our tucker in the mess-house. Us 'furriners,' as they called us, had to start a mess of our own, and for peace and quietness the Old Man got the company to pay the wages of another Chow to cook for us. So you see, the 'furriners' was pretty well bound to stick together; anyway, Tom and me got on first-rate. He wasn't much of a chap to talk, Tom wasn't, but I could do enough in that line for the both of us. He used to read a good bit in them books: he read a good yarn to me once, when I had a bad tooth, about an old man who had a family of daughters who went back on him and carried on something scandalous. Fair scorchers they was. It was printed in French, but Tom read it in English. It sent me to sleep, fine.

"Sundays, I used to go out kangarooin' with my dog, when the Old Man fancied his horse ought to be exercised. Tom used to go out too, for long walks by himself. One Sunday I was comin' home, with a black feller carryin' a kangaroo, and I found Tom sittin' down, knappin' stones

with a hammer, and that was the first time I knew he went prospectin', he was that quiet about it. He walked home with me, alongside the horse, and hardly said a word. That night, after supper, he says to me, 'George,' he says, 'I believe I've found a silver-mine.' 'Where?' says I. 'Well, that's the point,' says Tom. 'I dunno whether it's on the company's land or outside it. It's where you picked me up to-day.'

"Well, we talked about it a long time. Tom explained to me how he'd tested the stone with his chemicals and blowpipe, and found there was silver-bearing stuff within ten foot of the surface. He said it was rich stuff, too—as good as Broken Hill, he reckoned. I don't understand much about chemicals and that myself, but Tom said it was a dead bird. He reckoned that if it was on the company's claim it was his duty to tell 'em; but, as I told him, if it wasn't on their claim and they was told of it, they'd make a rush for it and he wouldn't stand no show. Of course, all mineral leases have got to be pegged out and marked; but the company's boundary-posts on that side was burnt two years ago in a bush-fire, and no one ever took notice to put 'em up again, and neither Tom nor me knew where they was. We didn't even know if the company had one square mile, or two, or three, and we couldn't find out without lettin' somebody smell a rat. Tom kep' away from the

place, and said he'd go down to Peddlin'ton and find out all about the lease.

"Well, while we was thinkin' about it, the orders came and the mine shut down, and Tom got the sack. After the others had gone, he moved up to this house along o' me, and he turns - to with his chemicals again and shows me the tests. In the office here we found a plan of the land, two and a half square miles, that the company had a lease of. Tom took the bearin's with his compass, and we paced it out; Tom's prospectin' shaft was well inside. He was pretty sick, you bet; but he said he'd see the company's agent and find out about the lease, when it expired, and that. He reckoned he'd go to Sydney, if Peddlin'ton wouldn't do. So he went down overland ridin' the Old Man's horse, which the Cap'n had asked me to send down to MacIntyre first chance I got. Well, I reckon Tom was better at readin' than writin', or p'raps he went on a bust, though he was a steady cove, or p'raps he wrote, and the letter got lost (of course there's no reg'lar mail),—anyway, I never heard a word until I got a letter from Dr Baker sayin' Tom was dead, and I was to have his things. I sunk two more trial-shafts near the other, where Tom showed me, and traced the lode all right, as fur as I can tell by the look of the stuff.

"Well, now, look here, Jack. I don't know what the company's up to. I never see the

papers, and I don't know the price of copper. Maybe they'll start the mine again, or p'raps they're keepin' me here just to keep somebody else out. I don't know the law. I don't know if they've paid the rent to Government, nor how long they can hold on without workin', nor when the lease'll be up, nor nothin'. Here's a bloomin' silver-mine, and I want it. I got my miner's right, but what's the good of me peggin' out, if the company can come down and say it's their land, and I'm their servant? If it was gold, alluvial, I'd be all right. I'd soon get a mate from somewhere, and we'd be makin' our pile on the quiet, and no one'd know where it come from. But a silver-mine ain't no poor man's job. What d'you reckon I better do?"

Here was a case in which the actual, technical, legal, and ethical issues all demanded some consideration. Against his private judgment Barton was induced by his ignorance of mining custom to put the ethical one last.

After some talk they went to bed, leaving the matter undecided.

At breakfast-time next day a black fellow arrived on horse-back. He had come from the nearest post-office, at the Oxley, some sixty miles away, and was bound for the mission-station across the river. He carried a packet, wrapped in oilcloth and sealed, for the Reverend Fathers, and a letter addressed to Hansen.

The letter, which, by its date,

was nearly a month old, ran as follows:—

“PEDDLINGTON, PORT DALY,
Feb. 6th.

“DR. SIR,—I have received no communication or remittance from the Green River Copper Mining Coy., Ltd., since the 1st Ult.

“The funds at my disposal on the Compy.’s account will barely suffice, after paying yr. wages, to defray my own charges & expenses, & I assume that the Compy. do not intend to renew the lease of the Property, which will expire on the 10th Prox., at noon.

“I enclose receipt of the Comml. Bank for the amt. of yr. wages to end of present month in lieu of notice, and request you will consider yr. engagement terminated.

“It seems a pity that the Compy.’s property now in yr. charge shd. be abandoned, but on a/c of high rates of cartage & steamer hire I am unable to remove it. Shall be glad to see you if you come to town.—Yrs. faithfully,

“A. J. MACINTYRE, *Agent.*”

“There you are, George,” said Barton, handing back the letter and clapping him on the shoulder; “to-day’s, let’s see, 5th of March. March is what old Mac. means by ‘prox.’ You’re free of the company, and all you’ve got to do is to wait another five days and then walk into your property, my boy.”

Breakfast was a merry meal. After it, they went down to one of the huts, where Hansen had

bestowed a sackful of specimens from the trial-shafts. Barton had no more than a schoolboy’s knowledge of chemistry; but they carried the specimens to the blacksmith’s shop, and there, with the aid of Mr Schwob’s invaluable work, Williams’s chemicals, and the company’s forge, it was demonstrated to satisfaction that the stone contained silver. Poring over Schwob, Barton found a comparative table of existing mines, which showed that the ore was rich above the average.

In the afternoon nothing would serve but a visit to the claim. They went down all the shafts, and Barton found the same “indications” in each of them. Then they cut pegs in readiness for the marking out of the claim, and returned to write out an application for a lease.

The sick horse was now nearly recovered, and Barton’s departure was fixed for the 8th. On the 7th they went to a garden, about half-way to the river, where four Chinamen had established themselves while the mine was working, and had stayed on, hoping for the good times to come again. Where there are Chinamen there are always vegetables; in North Australia, scarcely anywhere else.

They bought onions, sweet-potatoes, and a pumpkin, and ate their fill of water-melon. As they were going away, laden, Hansen had an idea, stopped, and asked, “Say, Johnny, you got samshu?”

“Haw, no got,” replied the

head of the firm, an obese person, of whom it was hard to say whether his patronising manner or his naked stomach was the more offensive.

"Yes, John, you got," said Hansen, putting down his bundle. "Come on; you savvy, I got money."

With some reluctance, real or pretended, Ah Flick at last produced the square, high-shouldered bottle in which the brewage of somebody and Zoon goes round the world. Success to the claim was duly drunk. For the consideration of seven shillings, not more than twice its value, Barton, in an evil hour, became possessed of another of the big bottles, unopened. Tragedy, had he but known it, lurked under the black seal.

They rode home. After supper, for the first time, they sat down to cards. To Barton the gin was little better than nauseous, and he was, besides, by taste and habit temperate. A pint pannikin, in which the spirit was very liberally diluted with water, would have sufficed him for the evening. Seeing Hansen drink steadily of the neat liquor from an old wine-glass, he took another nobbler for company's sake.

Their game was euchre, which, when there are only two players, may be loosely called an infantine form of écarté. Barton won. They played for pence at first, but Hansen soon warmed, challenged his opponent to more serious play, and began scribbling I.O.U. notes for shillings, then for half-crowns. Of course

he sometimes won, but upon the whole he continued to lose, and with a bad grace. And to drink.

Hansen was of those, common wherever English is spoken, perhaps in Australia commonest, upon whom drink seems to exert a dæmonic power of transformation. It was not only that, like the luckless Cassio, he had "very poor and unhappy brains for drinking." The falsity of that falsest of proverbs, "In vino veritas," was never more nakedly displayed. By nature genial, humane, intelligent, and in his own way polite, a few nobblers had power to turn poor George into an ill-conditioned blackguard. He became both insolent and morose, insanely sensitive to slights insanely imagined, and truculently ready, at a look, to pour forth words of the kind that, everywhere, are usually followed by blows.

The games succeeded one another, Hansen, with sneering words, insisting upon the higher stakes. Barton kept his temper, but he was tired and drowsy, and longed to be done with it. His run of luck continued; even when, of set purpose, he tried to throw the game away that Hansen might get back his money, it was useless. He might play ill, but his sulky adversary played worse. At last he said—

"George, I'm sick of this. I'll stay another day, if you like, and you can have your revenge to-morrow. Let's knock off, and go to bed."

"Oh yes, that's like a blasted

new chum, that is," returned Hansen, in a thick-tongued drawl. "Get all my bloomin' stuff, an' then, says you, 'Less knock off.'"

For answer to this, Barton took the pile of I.O.U.'s and tore them into little pieces. "Rot!" said he. "Of course it's all make-believe. We've not been playing for money."¹

"What!" cried Hansen. "Think I can't pay, do yer? You look here, Mister bleedin' Barton, don't you try to come the fine ol' English 'entleman over me, or, by Christ! you'll dam' soon find you're mistook." Then, changing his tone to that of an evil gaiety: "C—come on, mister, I'll play you for double or quits. Let's 'ave a drink first, though."

He reached for the bottle, which still contained an inch or so of spirit. Barton's hand was the quicker, and grasped the bottle firmly.

"Don't be an ass, George," he said. "You've had enough, man. Let me throw the damned stuff away. As for the game, we're quits already."

He moved towards the open door. Hansen was on his feet in an instant. His long hair streaked his face with black; his eyes were those of a mad animal.

"Gimme that bottle!" he screamed, and hurled himself upon Barton.

The bottle, flung by Barton, crashed on a verandah-post.

The struggle was short. The drunkard, striking and clutching in his fury, was no match for the heavier man. Barton struck no blow, but the straightening of his right arm, with his body-weight behind it, sent the madman to the floor. He scarcely tried to rise, but lay there, spitting insults and obscenity.

Barton, wiping the blood from a cut under one eye, went forth. He gathered up his blankets and carried them down to one of the huts, where his other belongings had been placed in the pack-bags, ready for his early-morning departure. Harry lay snoring among the saddles and gear. The horses were in the "yard" munching the last of Captain Ryan's chaff.

He lay down, but the desire for sleep had left him, and he walked forth again. The night was far spent. The moon, a little past the full, had "slipt a silver train of cloud from her shoulders, and, with her foot upon the tree-tops, surveyed heaven."² The forms of the grey-thatched roofs were visible in clear light and shade.

The loneliness and sadness of the empty settlement appealed for the first time with full force to Barton's mind. There broods over human dwellings, thus become derelict for no fault of their own, abandoned while yet habitable, a spirit of frustration, gloomy and forlorn. If such dwellings be not haunted,

¹ I am reminded that a similar incident, and almost the same speech, have been related by Stevenson, as the end of a gambling bout. I cannot help it; they happened in my tale. I know that Barton had read 'The Wrecker.'

² Meredith.

it is hard to believe that any are. In imagination Barton restored life and activity to the scene. Sturdy figures of miners moved among the huts on their way to work. Hammers rang on the anvil, the sound of voices mingled with the tremulous gasps of the pumping-engine and deep rhythmic breathing of the forge. The tall form of the old Captain, white-bearded, austere, stood in the office doorway. The long team of oxen moved down the track, dragging the great waggon, heavy with mineral.

And then, one day, at the nod of some among the conclave of wizards who rule the destinies of the mining-market, a stroke or two of a pen in some dim office far away, the clicking of the telegraph, came the naked savage with his "letter in the split of a bamboo," and in the twinkling of an eye the picks were dropped, the fires drawn, the huts abandoned, and the human parts of the machine scattered over a continent.

The desolation was not yet complete. The undergrowth was springing up between the buildings and closing over the paths. Another dry season, and fire would, most likely, sweep away the huts, leaving their sites to be usurped by the eager jungle. Of the traces of man's reign would be left nothing but the uglinesses,—the iron house, the broken bottles and tins, the white, barren dump.

These meditations were interrupted by the sound of a bullet, which sang high down the valley, while the muffled

report of the shot from inside the house showed that the wretched man within was waking and still malevolent.

So, the drunken beast was shooting at him, was he? That was final, then. Pity vanished, and anger flamed in its place. He thought of the man's insults, and of the hateful scene in the house; friendship was drowned in disgustful resentment. Perhaps Hansen had shot himself. What matter if he had?

Another shot, clipping twigs above his head, set doubt at rest. There was a threatful howling from the house. Barton's revolver was among his blankets; but he had no thought of retaliation, which would in any case have been mere madness, for the other in his defences would have an attacker at his mercy. No; the one relief possible was to get away from the neighbourhood of the mine and try to forget the ugly business. He moved into the shadow and sat down, to watch the house till dawn.

That momentary notion of the drunkard's suicide had started a new train of thought. Supposing Hansen dead, there was nothing in the world to prevent him, Barton, from possessing himself of the silver claim, taking out a lease, and in a short time, and in all probability, becoming a rich man. Envy awoke.

Though by nature far from thoughtless, he was not given to thinking about his own career: when, as now, he reviewed it, its ill-success was the most persistent fact that faced him. He had left Eng-

land, a boy of eighteen, with a vague notion that Fortune was to be victoriously wooed in Australia by the agreeable methods so invitingly set forth in the novels of Henry Kingsley. Confronted with reality, this innocent belief had died without a struggle. An incorrigible experimenter with Life, he had drifted from place to place, from employment to employment (liked in all, indispensable in none), readjusting his standards, as he went, to the environment of the hour. He lacked the gift of concentration. It had not fallen to him to be a leader in the war of life, and he found the part of the private in the ranks dull and uninteresting. For him life had become a spectacle: if he continued honestly to earn a living, it was by way of payment for his place as a looker-on. It happened he had not undergone the final test of actual destitution, but he had never been anything but poor. The large ideas with which he had emigrated had so far vanished, that for two years or more his aim in life, if he can be said to have had one, had been to make or save the means of paying his passage to some other country. To natures like his, the "fresh start" always offers hopes.

Thanks to a self-denial not usual with him, he was in a fair way to achieve this when he received the legacy, and, changing his plans, prepared to try a last throw with Fortune in Australia.

Under his eyes, as it were, the goddess had turned her

wheel and flung riches at the feet of one who—his imagination pictured Hansen, wealthy, in a world of drinking-places, peopled with thirsty loafers. The vision was not one to linger over. "Poor devil!" said he, with a moment's revived pity; "I give him three months, at the outside."

How much better, in every way, had the lot fallen to him. His people were, not miserably, but shabbily, poor, leading a narrow life on his father's small pension. He would have established them in comfort, provided for his sisters. For himself, it was not "pleasure" he longed for, but a more rational existence. His intellect craved for the stimulating life of cities among his kind, for the heritage of Europe. His heart claimed the fruition of his passing youth, the natural joys of man. Was he to be for ever thwarted and crippled by the lack of pence? Was he indeed chained down to a barren destiny?

If it were not for Hansen,—

If that drunken clown had shot himself,—

Before dawn he aroused Harry and helped him to saddle the horses, and the east was but beginning to lighten when they were upon the road. By sunrise they reached a point on the main road to the river whence a blazed track led to a crossing some miles below the steamer-landing. Barton had determined to visit the mission-station, and this track had been pointed out to him by Hansen as the nearest way to it.

They followed it without difficulty. On the far side of an open flat, some six miles from the junction, a thread of smoke was ascending in the still air of the morning. Barton rode over to see who was camped there, and found two blacks—a man and a woman. The man asked in good pidgin-English for some tobacco. Barton gave him a piece, and, after exchanging a few words, rode on.

They reached the river about nine o'clock. At this point it was of the width of the Thames at Twickenham, and flowed between steep banks covered with bamboo and cane-grass. The water was of a dark bluish-green colour, whence the stream derived its name. A ship's boat lay moored under the opposite bank.

Barton cooey'd several times, with no visible or audible result beyond startling a crowd of yellow-crested white cockatoos, which flew screaming down the river. He fired a shot, and presently a black fellow in breeches appeared, and after taking a leisurely survey, vanished over the ridge of the bank. About ten minutes later a white man came down, followed by three blacks. These also scrutinised the new arrivals, the white man by the aid of a field-glass, then cast off the boat and pulled across.

The white man greeted Barton with a large and almost toothless smile and a few half-intelligible words. He was a raw-boned youth of twenty, and singularly ugly. When he spoke, which was seldom, it was with a German accent.

He carried a two-foot revolver on his belt. The natives wore light-blue cotton breeches like running-shorts, and each had a scapular slung round his neck. Barton crossed in the boat, bidding Harry wait with the horses.

The mission buildings stood in a clearing on the far side of the river belt of jungle. The priests were three in number, Austrians by nationality and Jesuits in religion. They were bearded like Rabbis, and garbed to the ankles in the orthodox black cassock, a costume very ill suited to the place and climate. Some two years they had been planted there, a far outlying picket of the Church's army, fighting what to them was devil-taught wickedness, to a layman the primitive instincts of the unbroken human animal. Gallantly waged, the fight was to the non-ecclesiastical onlooker so patently futile as to seem an appalling waste of energy.

The head of the little community, Father Celsus, spoke English fluently. He bade Barton welcome, and showed him over the settlement. The traveller was besought to stay the night, and word was sent, by the mouth of the lay-brother of the boat, to Harry, to bring the horses round by a ford some two miles away.

The Father was unaffectedly glad to meet one from the outer world, even the world of Peddlington and the Bush, and the two spent much of the day in talk, as they paced up and down the "cloister,"

by which name was dignified a colonnade of bamboos supporting a grass roof. The buildings, down to the huts in which they attempted to settle the natives, had been erected by the priests' own hands, aided by those of the four lay-brothers and such occasional and temporary "converts" as were obtained by doles of food and tobacco.

Father Celsus was a man who talked, and talked well, not without a certain wistfulness, of Vienna, of Innsbruck, of Rome (with a flash of the eye), of art, and literature, and politics. His present life, and the lives of his colleagues (save perhaps that of Brother Conrad, of the toothless smile, who was said to be a mighty hunter before the Lord), were devoid of all worldly pleasure, and of all but the humblest comforts. Cut off from country and friends, almost from all human intercourse, buried in this wilderness of an alien land, he knew that only death would relieve his guard. Yet he spoke serenely and even hopefully; his appearance and manner were not those of an unhappy man. Such are the subalterns of Rome. Barton could but marvel, and feel a profound respect for these, the only self-denying missionaries he had ever met.

In the evening the "converts" on hand, to the number of a dozen or so, collected round a tub of rice cooked by a lay-brother, and having chanted, not unmelodiously, a long grace in "the native" to an old monkish air, fell to upon their

rations. Their bestial noises and gestures accorded so ill with the pretty and solemn-sounding prelude that Barton could not hide a movement of disgust.

The Father's smile was sweet. "Poor children, my poor children," he said, "I am a man for, as it is said, to each success, the ringing of bells, the cry and fro, and the prayer: The Englishman was to these things, and were of tone, as vain to the laymen. I saw the swimmers in the dry stream, stood on the dry self, a good and took its way

It was a fast-day. At breakfast the one cooked dish, of boiled fish and rice, was pushed about the board that each sitter might help himself. The lay-brothers, a somewhat furtive-seeming crew, messed with the priests.

Father Celsus was frankly lamenting the defection of some of his flock. "There was one," said he, "of whom I had great hopes. He had a remarkable influence over others (though, indeed, a foreigner in this region), and was very intelligent. And after a so long absence, a year or more, he returned three weeks ago, with his wife, to whom I married him when he was here before. It was the return of the prodigal. 'Father,' said he, 'you

all-same my father, now I come sit down all-day.' I gave him food, and a little land-plot, and he was really working on it. And now, since three days, he is gone, his wife also. It is a disappointment. Poor fellow! he has a sad history. A miner at the copper-mine grievously ill-treated him. The old story, I am afraid, Mr Barton,—the wife, though indeed she is neither young nor beautiful. He was beaten, he was turned away from his employment, and I believe even Captain Ryan, a just and strict man, threatened his life."

Barton started. "What was the fellow's name?" he asked.

"I baptised him by the name of Paul," replied the priest. "I believe he is in general known among the English as 'Charley.'"

"Long Charley? Is his lubra a tall, sl— I mean, is she very tall? Has she a defective eye?" asked Barton quickly.

"He is a tall fellow, yes; and his wife, yes, she is also tall, and has a strabismus. You know them?"

Barton sank back in his chair. "I met them yesterday," he said. "Saw them camped on the other side."

The simple meal over, he went outside and called Harry to saddle up. He seemed to remember, though he had seen him only squatting, that the black fellow to whom he had given the tobacco was of great stature. The lubra, he was almost certain, though he had not consciously noticed the fact at the time, squinted, and he

recalled Hansen's description. At any rate, it was certain that Long Charley, the convicted murderer of white men, who was said to have threatened Hansen's life, had been at the mission and had disappeared. Hansen, therefore, was in immediate danger, increased twentyfold if his state of drunkenness endured.

It is but justice to say that the thought of his reception, if the drunkard had not recovered his senses and chose to treat the warning as superfluous, caused Barton no hesitation. Still less the thought of profiting by Hansen's being killed. His mind was instantly made up to return to the place he had hoped never to see again.

His farewells at the mission were somewhat hurried. He rode round by the ford, and the sun was already high when he found himself retracing his tracks of yesterday. There was no time to be lost. As he rode he thought of all that Hansen had said of Long Charley, and became more and more convinced of the urgency of his errand. He pictured Hansen drunkenly slumbering, at the mercy of the vindictive savage; and, at the thought, he spurred his beast, and pushed on far ahead of Harry and the pack-horse.

Making the best speed he could, towards eleven o'clock he cantered up the track to the blacksmith's shop, hung the reins of his sweating horse to a post, and mounted the slope. A trail of flour leading over the

threshold and towards the hillside seemed to show that something was wrong before he reached the house. At the door the sight of bloody finger-marks upon the woodwork made him catch his breath. He drew his revolver. The beating of his heart seemed louder than the laboured breathing of his horse, the only other sound that broke the hot stillness.

He entered, prepared for the worst: his first step on the floor was echoed by a groan. In the inner room, his arms resting on a table by the window, and his head upon his arms, sat Hansen. From the shoulder-blades downward his singlet was black with blood, and blood dripped slowly from him as he sat. The worst, or almost the worst, had happened.

He raised his head, and at the sight of Barton there broke over the stony face a smile that was cut short by a spasm. "Did you get him?" he whispered, with a glance at the pistol. Barton shook his head. The face went down again on the arms, and a rattling groan came through the shut teeth.

"Here, for God's sake, cut this out," the stricken man whispered. "It'll finish me, I daresay; but I can't stand the pain no longer."

He bared his breast. Edging the lowest rib on the right side was a bulging discoloured patch, whose centre was a hard point straining the purple skin.

It seemed to Barton that any form of action would be better than none. He fetched an old table-knife, worn to keenness,

set his teeth, and performed his first surgical operation. The incision gave instant relief. A spear-head of chipped stone, three inches long, shaped like a mango-seed, slipped, almost leapt, from the wound. Barton stanching the bleeding that followed with a mass of wet sheeting. He cut away the remains of the singlet, washed the wound in the back, cut up a shirt and made pads, which he soaked in weak carbolic solution, ripped another sheet into bandages, and in half an hour had the wounded man, clean and almost comfortable, propped in a sitting posture on his bed, under the mosquito-net, out of reach of the swarming flies. Then, hearing Harry arrive with the horses, he wrote an urgent note to Father Celsus (who had taken a medical degree), and sent the disgusted black-boy off at the gallop.

Exhausted by suffering, Hansen slept for eleven hours. Though hardly venturing to hope that the murderer would be found lurking there, Barton took the rifle and made the round of the premises. He entered the tunnel: on the bench of Captain Ryan's alcove he found a pillow, in the cutting outside the arch a broken glass jar which had contained spirits of wine, and near this the broken reed-shaft of a spear. He climbed some distance up the hillside, following the trail of flour as far as he could see it. Tracks were (to his eyes, at least) invisible on the rocky surface.

He returned to the house,

and in his stocking-feet moved softly about. The storeroom door stood open: a pile of tins had been thrown down, a bag of flour had been dragged away. Inside the storeroom was the corpse of poor "Smiler," his skull smashed.

The watcher made himself some tea, and sat, occasionally dozing, in the blood-stained chair till near midnight, when Hansen awoke. His mind was clear, and he whispered that he had little pain. He was obviously weaker. The Father had not arrived.

"Well, sir, it seems I made a silly fool of myself," began the patient, with an anxious smile.

"Oh, that's all right, George, old man; don't you worry yourself about that," said Barton, huskily. "And look here, don't you get jawing too much—it won't do you any good. I've sent for Father Celsus; he'll be here soon, and he'll fix you up better than I can. Charley's away, I'm afraid; but we'll get him by-and-by, and he won't be let off this time, you can bet."

But George would not be silent. He knew that he was booked through this time, he said, and he reckoned he'd better get what he had to say off his chest. And, another thing, he didn't want any old squarehead priest fossicking around, even if he was a doctor. He was past doctorin', he reckoned, and anyway, he was a Protestant, he was, and didn't hold with Catholics, though there was no denyin' them priests had a hard time of it, and didn't live high like

what he'd heard other missionaries did. He reckoned the blacks would take charge some day, and sprag the lot of 'em, if they didn't watch it.

He had no recollection, it seemed, of having fired at Barton, for he did not mention it. Barton was glad, and said nothing. The sick man lay quiet for a few minutes, and then began again—

"It was eleven o'clock by the sun (the clock was run down) when I woke. I was awful thirsty, my head ached fit to split, and my tongue was like a gohanna's back. I drank some water, but it didn't do me no good. I reckoned to wait till it got a bit cooler and then walk down to the Chow's garden for some more square-face. I hunted among them chemicals of poor old Tom's, and found some spirits of wine. It was pretty bad, but I believe it done me good. I didn't take more'n about a spoonful. My head was real bad, and it was awful hot, so I got my pillow and went into the tunnel and had a lay down where the Cap'n used to have his banj. I took the spirits along, but I don't think I drank any more. It was cool in there, and I must have slep' four or five hours. When I woke, Smiler was outside barkin'. I lays there a bit, listenin', then I gets up and goes out to see what was up.

"Then it happened, what I always reckoned would happen. I got one tremenjous drive in the back, that knocked me silly. I knew what it was,

and who done it, the moment I got it; but down I goes like a bullock, and never moved for I suppose half an hour. When I come to myself, I wouldn't move for a bit, in case that devil might be waitin' to finish me off. Then I hears Smiler inside the house, barkin' like a good un, and so I knew that swine was there. I hears a smack, and that was the end of poor old Smiler: I hope he bit the beggar's long legs. Well, I crawled about three or four yards, to where I could see the house, and I see Mister Charley come out with half a sack o' flour. He sings out, and Emma comes up—I reckon she'd been watchin' the track; good job for me she hadn't the savvy to get a bit up the hill, or was too lazy—she'd 'a seen me movin'. It was comin' on dark by that time. Well, Emma starts off up the hill with the flour on her head—a pretty good load for rough country. I laid flat where I was, but I seen Charley come out again with a string net full o' tins, and smokin' my pipe, the one you gave me, the son-of-a-bitch!

“O my God! If I'd had the little rifle then, old man, I could 'a put as many bullets into him as he had arms and legs, before he knowed what the matter was. And, by God! if I could 'a done that I wouldn't 'a minded dyin' after; straight, I wouldn't.”

He paused, spat blood, and leaned back, gasping.

“I shan't last much longer, Jack,” he went on after a few

minutes. “You must let me finish tellin' the yarn. You know you said I was a good hand at a yarn. And there ain't much more of it.

“The swine had on an old blue cotton coat, what the Cap'n used to wear when he went below. You remember that, Jack; you might see that coat, or bits of it. I reckon he took it for the pockets: I haven't looked in the storeroom to see what he took, but I expect they was full up o' 'bacca and matches. He had my belt and revolver, too, don't forget that. There ought to be two full boxes of four-fifties in the storeroom; if they're all right, he's got no more than the six cartridges; there wasn't none in the pouch.

“Well, he took an' looked all around, like as if he wanted to make sure he hadn't forgot nothin'. Then he takes a drink of water out o' the barrel by the kitchen door; I couldn't see him, but I heard him sling the pannikin agin the iron wall. Then I suppose I must 'a fainted,—the pain was pretty bad, and I'd lost whips of blood. Maybe it was a good thing I did faint; if he'd passed anyways near me, goin' away, I might have hollered at him, and he'd 'a come and filled me up with lead out of my own revolver. There's no doubt he reckoned I was knocked out first time, and him havin' only the lubra with him, and wantin' to get away with the tucker before dark, he didn't spare time to chop me up like what him and the

others done to Jim Nelson and that lot.

"Anyway, when I woke again the sun was down, and he was gone. I sat up, and began feelin' my back. The spear had broke off about a foot away from me when I fell. I got a hold of the stick and wriggled it out. It didn't hurt, not so much as you'd think, but there was a lot more blood, and blood kep' comin' up in my throat. Then I knew I was done for. Before that, I'd thought p'raps I might get over it, like Harry Davis did.

"I sat up to keep the blood out of my throat, and somehow I managed to get off the dump and down as far as the door. Then I grabbed the doorposts and pulled myself up, and got inside. One good job, I'd filled the big water-bag in the mornin', and hung it by the door. Charley never saw it, or else he thought he'd enough of a load already. I had a big drink, and I wanted it bad. I hung the bag on the bedpost, where I could reach it. I got the rifle and put her on the table, and then I sat in the chair.

"I didn't faint no more, and I didn't sleep. It wasn't likely anybody'd come, but I reckoned to give 'em a chance. I wanted to say a word about who done it. I got it wrote out too; it's there, but I dunno if them lawyers 'ud find it good enough. They're so fond of niggers. I had water, and if the pain got too bad, or I got flyblown, there was the rifle.

"Then the morning came, and then you, and that's about all, and now I think I'll have a sleep."

He slept. Barton found the deposition on the table, scrawled in pencil on the flyleaf of 'Père Goriot':—

"This is 'to certify that the undersigned George Hansen being of sound mind &c. was Speard at the Green r. copper Mine yesterday by the said black Fellow long Charly I am dying therfore long charly the man who done it is Gilty of murder. so help My GOD. This is a true Statment. signed this 9th Day of march in the year of Our lord 189— by the said G. Hansen.

"GEO. HANSEN."

Barton thought of the sorely stricken man sitting there alone with his pain, waiting through the dark hours for the Pale Deliverer, and using the first light of day for the making of this queer document.

Hansen awoke two hours later, scarce able to speak. He whispered in Barton's down-bent ear. "Mr Barton, Jack, I mean, could you, — would you mind,—I'd like it if you was to say a piece out of the Bible, old man. I got a Bible, but I dunno where it is."

Barton fetched his writing-case out of one of the pack-bags. In it was a tiny prayer-book, given him, years ago, by a sister. It was seldom enough (he reflected, with a vague feeling of shame) that he had opened it. The case contained

a diary also, and it appeared that the day about to dawn was a Sunday.

He did not venture upon the Prayers for the Dying. Shamefast and awkward, he read the collect of the day, and sentences of Scripture at haphazard.

After the Lord's Prayer Hansen remarked that he didn't think "as we forgive them," &c., was intended to apply to blacks. He couldn't forgive Long Charley, and there was no sense in pretending that he did. He forgave every one else.

He executed an informal will, bestowing the silver claim upon Barton, on condition of his doing something for his, Hansen's, father.

He died at sunrise. A few minutes later, Barton, weary and overwrought, stood in the verandah, gazing blankly at the new day. Two groups

were approaching from opposite directions along the track. To the right was Father Celsus, riding Barton's horse, which Harry was leading. From the left came two white men and two black, all mounted, with several pack-horses. The leader rode straight up to the house, a youngish man in spectacles, breeched and gaitered in London fashion. In the other white man Barton recognised MacIntyre.

"Aw—good morning," said the leader. "My name is Gelli-brand. I represent a syndicate which has taken over the property of the Green River Copper Mining Company. I have come to take possession and renew the lease. I think I am just in time," he added, with a smile.

"Yes," replied Barton, "you are just in time."

ERNEST DAWSON.

THE PLEASURE OF ANGER.

WHOSO denies it has never known anger, not at any rate that gusty wholesome hurry of sea-wind which only is true anger. Of another kind, of the dreadful, sombre furnace, upon whose blast the ashes of Othello's withered soul blew, to mingle with those of the father of all slayers, nothing will be said here. That is not anger, but wrath. "Why art thou wroth?" said the Lord to Cain, looking into the "countenance fallen," so terribly fallen that even Eve, in Byron's gloomy mystery, detects his secret with eyes surely not reputable for discernment—

"I see it now; he hangs his guilty head
And covers his ferocious eyes."

But anger is another thing. It should never slay man or beast except in a god, or his earthly prototype, a maniac. Yet it is strong wine, and must be quaffed warily; the more warily the more it delights. That there is peril dogging the pleasure the old Greek mythology carefully pointed out to mortals when it made Heracles dash the life out of poor Linus in a fit of pure anger. Nor are these venerable fables to be sneered at as signposts for modern life; scarce one of the moral lessons may not be learnt from them. Were not their old deities, with their violent and disastrous careers, their lusts, their bombast, their general superabundance, so many examples to man of the troubles of unbridled licence,

magnificent archetypes of Hogarth's Idle 'Prentice? If there is pleasure in anger, then, the whisper of danger is ever audible behind its uproar, wherein, indeed, lies one of its very pleasures. The mildest-mannered man, the timidest, the weakest may share it; it beguiles him to forget for a time the secret shame which for ever haunts a creature of creation recent enough to entertain still a sneaking reverence for bluster, boldness, and biceps, the armament of his primeval begetters.

To him there is an ancestral pride in the sudden flush, the rolling eye, the hand uplifted as if to batter with a club, the hoarse and menacing voice, the flinging wide of chest and shoulders, cramped at all other times: all these, the insignia of anger, are also the insignia of manhood. They prove him, so drab, so tame, to have yet within him the fires which spread terror in the dawn of the world. There is pleasure in playing with fire. There is pleasure in apeing the warrior, the slayer of men, a pleasure all the keener that the battlefield is a parlour in Croydon, and the destroyer so "average" a man that he has all but lost himself in the disheartening pullulation of men exactly like himself. With such a look, with such a gesture, with such a snarl, would he kill, were it not Croydon, were he not his neutral-tinted self. The joy of even seeming to be danger-

ous! The poor madman—for all who slay in parlours must be mad—yields to all this as De Quincey fell to opium. A murderer must have rehearsed murder many times in the mufti of look, gesture, and snarl before he commits it in bloody full dress. Ay, to some there is a danger in anger surely enough, and once more the old heathen fable deserves the thanks of Christians.

But the pleasure in playing with fire is dependent on its shortly going out. No sane man would hug his anger were he suspicious that it were inextinguishable. It is its passage, not its presence, that pleases,—its whirlwindy approach, the wild confusion of its height, the diminuendo of its disappearance. Even at its worst, the knowledge that it is consuming nothing but itself is pleasurable—

“Like
A full-hot horse, who being allowed
his way
Self mettle tires him.”

—“Henry VIII.”

It is a relief, the only relief, for stall-fed spirits grown unmanageable on corn and confinement. It is the easement of mental tumours. Its very derivatives, *ἄγγελον*, *angere*, to choke or compress, hint inversely at its surgical virtues. Anger chokes no man, though it saves many from choking: it is nature's scarificator and cupping-glass to prevent spiritual hæmotrophy. At the very height of his attack the patient is conscious that he is

getting better; not one jot or tittle of his fury would he abate, so anxious is he to be rid of it. Like certain pacific Burghers in the recent war, he fires off his cartridges as quickly as he can, so that he may retire from the fray with the decent excuse of an unarmed man. Which is wiser by far than to attempt (no grown man ever yet succeeded) to follow the advice given by Athenodorus¹ and by every prosy dandiprat since, to dose the awakening fury with a chloroform spray of A B C. Vain task, even though the alphabet were the Chinese, with an army corps of twenty thousand letters embattled against the enemy, and dangerous if not vain. “To seeke to extinguish Anger utterly, is but a Bravery of the Stoickes.” In better case is the man (who has not seen him, commonly one in authority, a father or dominie?) who is so in love with his cure that he prolongs it beyond its cycle, and being no longer angry, yet keeps on the warlike uniform of anger. A man need never be ashamed of true anger, for it takes a true man to be angry. “Anger is one of the sinews of the soul,” and lacking that fibre the soul may lack all.

It is often amusing, even to the irate one himself, to note what little things excite and nourish his fit. Small coal is the best fuel for small fires; a sniff, an uplifted eyebrow, a little clumsiness, most of all that resigned and patient look which is alike the weapon and

¹ The Stoic, who recommended any man who wished to smother rising anger to repeat the alphabet.

the armour of professional angerers—these and a thousand like them are the *banderillas* which goad the subsiding bull into fresh roars in many a Bashan. Macbeth, even in the vortex of a maelstrom of guilt and nervousness, found time to be angry with a look—

“The devil damn thee black, thou
cream-faced loon!
Where gott'st thou that goose look?”

Poor “servant”! What replicas of his frightened self and his tempestuous reception has not Croydon, again, presented, when the parlour fire has gone out, or, quintessential villainy, has been lighted with the “register” down, emitting, like a war committee crackling within closed doors, nothing but the densest smoke!

Bacon wrote but ignobly of anger, treating of it in a chilly, Machiavellian spirit of strange inappositeness to its character. Probably his lofty soul knew nothing of it: the breath of opposition blew no flames to life in him, but rather, like the north wind over a mountain tarn, turned the surface into a film of ice. To him, the Kelvin of the mind, anger appeared as a force whose energy it were a pity to waste, and he shows you a thousand uses for it. But he who attempts to contrive profitable ends with anger as the means, is like one looking to a boiling geyser to turn a mill. It is waste force, its pleasure and virtue are in its very wastefulness. Turn it to account, store it up as the miller

stores water behind his wheel, it turns sour and becomes malice, a pickle for treasons, stratagems, and spoils. Iago was probably never angry in his life.

Anger, I have said, is strong wine, and it has this much of the vinous quality that it can loosen tied tongues, and turn men into orators who, unruffled, were too timid to be even satisfactory audiences. No vinegar melts so successfully the rocks of reserve; it is contentment, not anger, that is speechless. You may see, moreover, many a fuming man so much in love with his new-born eloquence that his delight in it kills its own mother, and he relapses shortly into the unwilling silence of appeasement. The rhetoric of anger is supreme in its fluency and wealth of imagery; the greatest orators have studied it to serve their purposes, and, unable to be angry, have yet assumed a virtue they had not in order to infuse it into others. And the gestures even with Britons, a race of clowns at posturing, are usually appropriate, almost beyond the hope of envious art. In truth, however, the action of a certain lord who, infuriated by any *contretemps* whilst out shooting, used to fling himself to the ground and gnaw the turnips,¹ seems somewhat too grandiose an expression of annoyance, and perilously near to insanity. Perhaps, however, the turnip, like the herb of Glaucus,² can fill the human mind with madness. If so, the biter has been justly bitten by

¹ The Badminton Library.

² Who ate a marine plant and plunged frenzied into the sea.

the most idiotic rhymster as well as the most foolish nobleman on authentic record. Mrs Thrale's couplets upon the dangerous vegetable are at once evidence and punishment—

"If the man who turnips cries
Cry not when his father dies,
'Tis a proof that he had rather
Have a turnip than his father."

But a man is unfortunate whose rage betrays him into such uncouthness. There is merciless truth in the wine of anger, and he who is drunk with it can hope to conceal nothing of himself but his affections. The world is full of swell mobsmen, who would be unrecognisable under their careful disguises but for their being occasionally surprised into the only vestige of Nature left to them, which they cannot discard, their anger. The crusty old cynic of Sinope, searching for a man, should have trodden on the toes (he would have loved the task) of all he met. He might not have found a man, but he would never have misjudged a fraud. But anger has revealed the greatness of the meek as often as the meanness of the mighty. Little Harrys of all ages have dated their manhood from their first fury, when, goaded by unendurable Master Mashams, they turned desperately and beat them to the earth, or, like the escaped bull in Day's same solemn masterpiece,¹ drove their tormentors as shrieking fugitives before them. There is pleasure, and value too, in the agony of the anger which turns the sob of humility into the snort

of defiance, and inspires a weakling who had never ventured a ha! ha! in all his life to blaze it forth at last among the very trumpets, like Job's splendid war-horse. But for such releasing flames the "soft ethereal warmth" of many an ardent soul had "starved in ice" for ever—

"There to pine
Immovable, unfix'd, and frozen round."

Finally, not the least of the pleasures of anger is that of its cessation. "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." No word in Holy Writ has had more direct influence upon humanity. But St Paul meant anger, not wrath, which, he knew well, sinks not to rest in the evening, but smoulders still under many chilly moons, and sees with hard wakeful eye the advent of many dawns. This indeed is the test of anger, that the march of one orb wears it down and leaves it exhausted and ashamed by the roadside. A man known to the writer raged throughout a night, and when the first sigh of returning day came over the sea, he went down to the quay to take the steamer to go to him who had grievously injured him and kill him. But the moon paled above him, and in that hushed interval between night and day, that interval which smells clean, as if God were opening a window in the world's close bedroom, a cool sponge seemed to be passed over the agony of the night, and he wept and went away.

SCOLOPAX.

¹ Sandford and Merton.

ROMAN CATHOLIC ALBANIA.

ALBANIA, that wild tract of mountainous country within a few hours' steam from Cattaro in a Dalmatian pleasure-steamer, passed by thousands of wealthy tourists on their way to Egypt, and only divided from Italy by a narrow strip of the Adria, is in a certain sense the anomaly of Europe. Yet here we have a land unknown and shunned, its maps far more inaccurate than those of Central Africa—for most of it has been filled in by guesswork—and peopled by a nation of fierce and reckless warriors. The country is unique in Europe; for while even little Montenegro has its schools, its law courts, and its newspapers, Albania knows of none of these things. Even their language is entirely distinct from any other European—in fact, its origin, as well as that of the Albanians themselves, is clad in mystery. The language is soft, and not unlike the Italian in sound—but here further resemblance ceases—and consists of about six hundred words. An Italian priest has compiled a dictionary and a rough grammar, and this work is the sole representative of Albanian literature. The language is not easy to learn because of the immense amount of idioms used in conversation, but it presents no insuperable difficulties to the student.

As to the people themselves, spoken of collectively as Albanians, or sometimes as Ar-

nauts, the idea gained thereby of a united nation is quite erroneous. They must first be divided into three, according to the religions—namely, Mohammedans, Greek Orthodox, and Roman Catholic Christians. These three religious factions constitute three entirely different peoples, each animated by fanatical hatred of the other; and they can be subdivided into clans and factions *ad lib.* As each clan can be reckoned as a miniature autocratic kingdom ready at any moment to go to war with its next-door neighbour, united only in a case of common danger, the anarchy existing all over Albania can be faintly imagined.

In their love of utter independence they have a bond, and in this alone; but even then one religious faction would fight another on the slightest pretext. At a pinch the Mohammedan section would fight for the Turks if the common enemy was Christian and appeared to be aiming at their enslavement; but it is a fact that the Porte has just as much trouble with the Mohammedans as with the Christians. One and all defy the Turk in every manner. They pay no taxes and give no soldiers, though some of them volunteer for military service. With a sublime indifference to the law, they go armed to the teeth; and though Turkey has sent vast armies in the past to

disarm them and enforce the law, within a year or two every man and youth possessed a rifle and revolver once more. To-day Turkey has neither the power nor the wish to disarm their last bulwark against the threatening West, and in this respect no little cleverness is displayed. We sometimes read of Mohammedan atrocities on Christians in Albania, but this is only where the Christian is in the minority. Where the positions are reversed, the Mohammedan gets just as much persecution as the Christian.

It is far beyond the writer's power to describe even faintly the whole of Albania (Macedonia is not included). Months of travel would be necessary to tell of Old Servia and the feuds between Mussulman and Greek Orthodox; or of the Epirus, where the Greek Albanian mutilates the Mohammedan in one district, and *vice versa* a few miles away; or of the dangers of the vast tract of country between Monastir and the Adria, where the Mohammedan reigns supreme.

But of the Northern regions the writer may speak with some authority. In every respect this part of Roman Catholic Albania is of extreme interest, both as regards the inhabitants and the magnificent scenery. On the lake bearing its name lies Scutari, the capital of Albania, the seat of a Vali and a large garrison. It is the only town of Albania that can be reached with any ease by tourists, and it is practically safe. A visit of a few days

is a revelation to any one unacquainted with these lands, for the bewildering variety of national costume to be witnessed there on the weekly market-day—or bazaar—is one of the most wonderful sights in Europe. The mountaineers descend in their thousands, journeying from far and near, armed with Martini rifle and revolver, but which they must leave behind at the guard-houses on the outer precincts of the city. With mules, donkeys, or wiry ponies, they enter the city in long strings: brawny, fearless-looking men; pretty tastefully attired girls, and jaded women.

The long intricate alleys of the bazaar, narrow noisome ways where the roofs of the shops meet overhead, shutting out the fierce glare, swallow them up, till towards evening they pour out again, streaming over the small plain in all directions, towards the wild mountains. And these people are all Christians, and very pious ones too, as the stranger will observe if he sees them passing the old walls of the whilom cathedral, conspicuous with whitewashed crosses,—when they clutch their beads and cross themselves repeatedly, many besides wearing little crucifixes upon their breasts.

Three-quarters of the odd forty thousand inhabitants of Scutari are Mohammedans, though the bishop resides there, and there is a large barnlike cathedral. This weekly Christian invasion on market-days constitutes a very real danger.

It is by no means a rare occurrence for the visitor to see a man shot in the street, and the Turks emphasise the always more or less critical situation by patrolling every alley and street, day and night, with pickets of fully armed soldiers. This ceaseless patrolling is quite one of the features of the city, and one becomes accustomed to meeting a ragged corporal and his two files slouching along at every turn. There is a heavy police force as well, but all these precautions cannot prevent bloodshed. One of the old tricks of the Christian clansmen has been to kill a pig, cut off its head, and with the blood smear great crosses in the interiors of the mosques, depositing the gory trunk upon the hodja's praying-mat. It is scarcely to be wondered at when the town next day is in an uproar, the bazaar closed for weeks together, and the Christian minority besieged in their houses by infuriated Mohammedans.

Of course, the consular quarter is always excellently guarded, so that the small European (if this expression may be used in its limited sense) element is never seriously threatened. To militate against such outrages no citizen may go abroad after dark without a lantern, loiterers without lights being ruthlessly arrested and locked up during the night. It has happened to the writer that, whilst listening to the quaint military "Last Post" (played nightly at eleven o'clock by the massed bugles of the garrison, and followed by two

pieces by the band) one hundred yards from the hotel, he has been surrounded five times in quick succession by different patrols, who evinced much disappointment in finding him to be a European, and as such inviolable.

It was only last year that matters were in a very bad way in Scutari again. The clan of Miridita, perhaps the strongest and certainly one of the finest clans in Roman Catholic Albania, had been up in arms for months. As they inhabit the land between the capital and the sea, they were able to inflict considerable annoyance on the Turks by closing the road to Medua, the Adriatic port for Scutari. They are, as far as the writer is aware, the only Christian clan that has the privilege of forming a regiment solely of its own men, officered by its chiefs and begs, for service in the imperial Turkish army. It is a privilege which the Miriditi jealously cling to; but when it is pointed out that this regiment refuses to leave its own territory, and turns out to close the roads, cut the telegraph-wires, and oppose the Turkish soldiers on the slightest difficulty, the humour of the situation is obvious.

Thus for several weeks they defied the Vali of Scutari last spring, and it was significant of their strength that not a single Turkish battalion ventured across their border, though they hovered upon it the whole time. At the same time that every stranger was rigorously excluded from their confines, they still possessed the effront-

ery to come down to Scutari in groups of sixes and sevens and stroll insolently through the bazaar, no one daring to say anything, though they were in open rebellion against the Sultan. The writer remembers well meeting several such parties; and the climax was reached one morning when a magnificent man of this clan, a noted beg, strolled into a small square in the bazaar, and suddenly producing a hidden revolver, shot down three unlucky Mohammedans before any one realised what he was about. One of the itinerant patrols appeared promptly, and riddled this dare-devil with bullets as he somewhat disdainfully fled.

When these men wish to kill they are absolutely reckless of the consequences. A man's life in Albania is worth one penny, as an educated Albanian once concisely put it—that being roughly the price of a cartridge.

Another equally characteristic episode happened in an inland town, when a clansman deliberately murdered a Turk upon the high street. He was arrested and locked up. Within twenty-four hours the Turkish governor was honoured by a visit from a deputation of the murderer's clan. These men demanded their comrade's release, and when peremptorily refused on the ground that the prisoner must stand his trial for murder, the deputation left, with the intimation that if he was not in their midst within forty-eight hours, the clan would descend and

burn the town. The governor had but a handful of Turkish soldiers, the nearest garrison was several days' march distance, and the clan numbered some two or three thousand fighting men. Needless to say, the man was released well within the time limit.

Another clan rebelled for some slight cause last spring, closing an important thoroughfare through their domain, and committing other grave misdeeds. A small army was sent to their district; but it was again significant that not a single Turkish soldier crossed the border, satisfying themselves with a formal blockade. The clansmen were content to watch the Turkish troops from their mountain-sides. A few weeks later the Turks withdrew, the clan granted right of way through their land, and the matter was dropped.

All these numerous clans live absolutely independent of each other, some in blood-feud, where they shoot each other at sight wherever they meet. As their borders are not always most satisfactorily defined, and each of the two neighbours holds strong convictions, battles royal often ensue. Then each clan turns out in full strength, and the victor establishes the borderline until the defeated clan is strong enough again to remonstrate. Several of these disputes occur annually amongst themselves and also with the Montenegrins. Sometimes the slaughter is great; at others, they are content with half a dozen killed on each side.

Another prominent and deep-rooted characteristic of the Albanian is his rigid adherence to the laws of the Vendetta. More deaths occur annually from this custom than from any other; and it must be pointed out that men are never wounded in the fulfilment of revenge. The avenger is not heroic: he waits for his victim, and only shoots when he knows he will kill. From behind a stone beside the path the victim must traverse, the deadly bullet comes at a few yards' distance, and usually he is shot in the back. Or again, while he is peacefully working in his field or at night sleeping in his hut, he may awake—if he awakes at all—to find a board in the roof removed and a rifle or revolver barrel pointing at him. In short, the man in blood-feud never knows when his hour will come; but *this* he knows—that it will of a very surety overtake him either to-day, next year, or when his hair is grey. A curious watchfulness pervades every man—a quick scan of every rock and bush on walking abroad, and ever-loaded weapons. An Albanian in blood-feud rarely walks alone. If he has to go a journey he waits till a party of five or six are going his way, and then he is comparatively safe. And, lastly, he never parts with his rifle. Even tilling the patch of ground before his home, he will have his rifle slung from his shoulder; if he is hoeing, it is lying ready to hand in the next

furrow; at church his rifle stands against the wall; the shepherd, singing love-songs to while away the long hours, has his rifle across his knees, and will lift it from time to time aiming at some object to keep his eye in practice.

The writer once on a journey to the Clementi, one of the most ill-famed clans, met a handsome grave man travelling to his home. With him he had his son, barely ten years old, and this child was as fully armed as his father, except that a carbine replaced the heavy Martini rifle. He wore the same pensive look. The man was in blood-feud, having shot a man half-inadvertently a few months ago. Already the son was playing a man's part in life, sharing his father's danger literally at every step, and beyond his diminutive stature there was no trace of his tender years on that half-dreamy, prematurely old little face. It was one of the most pathetic incidents that the writer witnessed, and he journeyed with them for several days. At eventide the man said his rosary piously, playing gently with the little children of his temporary hosts over the wood fire ere sleeping, and was, as are all the Albanians, a perfect gentleman in his manners.

Dastardly as is the means of fulfilling the vendetta, there is one chivalrous custom which is worthy of mention. Should a man of one clan kill another whilst outside his own border he may fly quickly for sanctuary to the dead man's nearest

relative, and there boldly state his deed, claiming immunity. He will be fed and rested, and then conducted to the border in safety. There the obligation of hospitality ceases, and the man will be told to keep an eye on himself, for the next time they meet the laws of vendetta hold good.

Hospitality is part of the very essence of the true Albanian. When once he is convinced that the stranger means no harm to his country, then he opens his house to him, and gives him of his best. But the Albanians are extremely suspicious, and it is this trait that constitutes the danger of travelling in their land. In every stranger (and by this is meant a man dressed in Western garb) they see a spy of some great Power sent to discover their weak points. Every Albanian is firmly convinced that one day an enormous foreign army will come to rob him of his dearly prized independence. In this respect they show great shrewdness, and when it is remembered that a ceaseless agitation is in progress, chiefly on the part of Austria (through the priests) and of Italy (by means of the schools) to gain influence, it is scarce to be wondered at that they look askance at strangers.

But to go amongst them as a sportsman (and here it is good to be an Englishman, as of this nation they have only remotely heard), as a good comrade that will drink with them, shoot with them, and play with them, is to be sure of such a magnificent and

hearty welcome as must be experienced to be realised. Then the Albanian proves to be a thoroughly good fellow, and courtesy itself.

The happy times that the writer has spent amongst these rough men, uncivilised in every respect of the word, yet possessing an astounding innate-ness of true courtesy, is one of his most pleasant recollections. Direly poor, existing solely on the produce of their fields and the realisation of their stock, which they breed and bring to the markets, thereby supplying their other wants, such as clothes, ornaments, and, last but not least, arms and ammunition, they give what they have, and their best, freely, and with the genuine joy of a true giver. They expect nothing in return, reckoning the honour theirs, and protesting loudly their chagrin at not having given more.

"May Jesus Christ be praised!" is their greeting, and the first question that they ask of the stranger is if he is fatigued.

But, as are all brave people, they are extremely sensitive. An instance of this was brought prominently before the writer's notice whilst travelling amongst these northern clans. A year or two previously a certain Italian professor of botany, Baldacci by name, had travelled much the same way. The usual hospitality was given him, he being personally acquainted with many of their Italian priests (another means of going safely into their

midst). He journeyed whither he would, and the frugal mountaineers opened their doors to him wherever he went. Once whilst riding near Scutari shots were fired, and the professor, doubtless eager to raise public interest on his behalf, told weird stories how that he had been fired upon. It was not the case, as the writer fully proved. Still he travelled in their midst, and returning home he wrote and lectured on Albania. No expressions were too strong to express his hatred and contempt of this people of whose hospitality he had partaken. He described them as murderous ruffians, as barbarous savages.

The one Western language that the Albanians know is Italian. The rich merchants of Scutari read the effusions of this polemic writer, the Italian monks in their lonely parishes read them, and the words of Professor Baldacci went through the land.

"Tell him," they said on many occasions to the writer, "if he comes again he will be shot of a verity!"

They were wounded to the quick, and in their tenderest place—*i.e.*, their hospitality to a stranger. As it happened, the writer on his return to Montenegro met Professor Baldacci, and heard that he contemplated another tour in that barbarous land. In spite of warnings he started, but within three days he returned. The border was closed to him.

The worst traducers of the Albanians are their neighbours

the Montenegrins, but this is mutual and scarce to be wondered at. Often has the writer been amused listening, first to the one and then to the other, admiring his bravery in going amongst such a treacherous, murderous race, and the tales of bloodthirsty deeds committed daily by "the other side."

After all, they are only great children, who play with life and death as we do with games. Vices they have none. They do not steal, neither are they immoral, and their word is their bond. They rigidly adhere to the ancient code of honour established by their forefathers centuries ago. In common with Western medieval customs, they still observe the holiness of breaking bread, or tasting salt. When once a man has tasted food in another's house he may never lift his hand against that man, be the provocation ever so great.

An illustration of the extreme to which they carry this law came under the writer's notice not long ago. A certain man went to his enemy's home at night with the intention of killing him. It was exceptionally dark, the moon not having yet risen, and the man hid in the garden of a neighbouring hut, waiting a favourable opportunity to creep up to his enemy's abode. Half unconsciously he plucked a maize cob at his hand, and munching it, whiled away the time. Suddenly the moon rose over an intervening mountain and illuminated the scene with her bright rays. The man rose

cautiously and looked about him. Then, with a muttered exclamation of disappointed rage, he stealthily stole away homewards. Inadvertently he had hidden in his enemy's garden and eaten of his crops.

The writer in his travels amongst these strange men accompanied a monk. The priests of these northern clans are all Franciscans—some of Italian nationality, not a few Austrians, and a large proportion of pure-blooded Albanians. This latter class has been educated in Italy and speaks fluent Italian. Indeed an Albanian priest looks as much a monk as the rest of his brethren. A few Albanians likewise receive their religious instruction in Austria, but this is an innovation. These men are magnificent fellows, not clean shaven as in other lands, for here a beardless man commands no respect, but sturdy, fierce-moustachioed, and sun-burnt, like the fighting priests of old. Their life is no easy one: their parishes are spread over vast tracts of wild mountains, and to visit the sick they must oft tramp from sunrise to sundown. In inter-tribal skirmishes they tend the wounded in the thick of the fight, and administer the last sacrament amidst a hail of bullets. The writer's great friend, the priest of the Clan Trijepshi, has his ragged brown habit riddled with bullets, an eloquent testimony to the dangers these servants of God risk in their daily life.

"What grand men they would be," observed a hale and

heartly monk of over seventy, referring to his parishioners, "if they would but keep the sixth commandment."

No amount of impassioned preaching can drive into these men's minds that it is wrong to take another's life. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed," they retort. "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," and the good monks clasp their hands in despair.

Sunday morning is an extraordinary spectacle amongst the Roman Catholic clans. Each monk has built himself a rude church—some have been built by their predecessors—ornamenting it with loving hands, carving roughly the wood for the altar screen or the stone for the font. As the sun nears its zenith the clan has gathered together, some members have travelled thither since day-break, rifles are piled in long rows against the church walls, and revolver in girdle, bandolier round their waists, they enter the sacred edifice, baring their half-shaven crowns from the enveloping head-cloths. Throughout the service they observe the deepest reverence. The monks have trained choirs in many instances: the writer has oft been present in some remote church in the heart of the wild mountains where the High Mass was fully choral. It is a strange and moving spectacle, and one not easily forgotten.

The men kneel apart from the women and children,—the women, as occupying the inferior position in life, being

relegated to the back of the church. It requires no little effort to suppress a smile at some of the quaint effects. One or two will suffice. The priest is fully robed in chasuble, and the altar, if tawdry, much the same as in any little country parish church; but to see a brawny giant assisting as "server," revolver and bandolier complete, gives an almost irreverent impression. He looks too like a character from a *bal masqué*, except that he is an exceptionally fine specimen of humanity. This same individual collects the offertory with a tin can, clanking the few coins therein vigorously, and stalking between the crowded kneeling worshippers with no little skill. However, the offertory does not yield much in coins, but in the monk's kitchen will be found cans of milk, great cheeses, sacks of wool, baskets of maize, and even a slaughtered lamb. Each clansman gives that which he can best afford, and that is given liberally.

Again, these men have religious observances quite in keeping with their warlike dispositions. At the conclusion of some great festival of the Church—that of their special patron saint, for instance—each man goes outside, takes his rifle, and discharges a cartridge into the air. With a congregation of one or two thousand men, the effect is grand, if very startling, to the uninitiated.

This warrior's salute to the Deity struck the writer as one of the most soul-stirring sights, and certainly one of the aptest

customs, that he witnessed. They salute their God, we our kings and princes, in precisely the same manner.

Yet it has happened that while a congregation was once deep in their devotions, shots were heard outside—rapid firing such as portend men fighting. As one man the worshippers rose, and before the priest had concluded the prayer they were streaming at a swift double towards the scene of the affray, shooting as they swung along, to signify that help was coming. Before the priest had divested himself of his robes, and followed his erring sheep, they were in the thick of a hot battle with a neighbouring clan. A few hours later the dead were laid out in the deserted church.

The most prominent of these clans to which the above refers, as much to one as to the other, bear the following names: The Miriditi, Clementi, Hotti, Grudi, Skreli, Trejepši, and Kastrati. There are many others, but of these the writer has no knowledge.

However, there is one more clan, without mention of which no paper on Northern Albania would be complete. It is the clan of the Gusinje, the most dreaded of all the hillmen. They inhabit a plain closed in by lofty mountains at the eastern corner of Montenegro. The Congress of Berlin gave this land to Montenegro instead of the equally Albanian seaport of Dulcigno. Some ten thousand Montenegrins, under the leadership of the celebrated Voivoda Marko Drekalović, all flushed with their recent victories over the

mighty Turk, which had won to them land as large again as their original possessions, marched into Gusinje to take over this last fruit of their success. A few hours later the intrepid Montenegrins found their match and more. Their teeth were broken in the cracking of this last nut, and their army was decimated.

The independence of Gusinje goes so far as that they maintain that they are not even Albanians. They are men of Gusinje, and acknowledge no sway other than their own clansman. They do not welcome strangers in their city, and indeed it is said to be courting death to sojourn in their midst. Last year they murdered the Turkish Kaimakan (or resident governor), and are still unpunished. A passport to their midst is crime—only the fugitive from justice is safe in their city.

The clansmen, however, journey far and wide to the markets, conspicuous by their truculent bearing and spotlessly white head-cloths. It is said on one hand that within an hour of a stranger's arrival in Gusinje city, the head-men meet together, a man is detailed to follow him and shoot him before he can recross the border. How far this is true the writer is not prepared to say, because a Turk well known in Gusinje offered to take him to Gusinje and gave his life as guarantee. The writer was on terms of blood-brotherhood with this Turk, a young merchant, and such a tie is sacred. With all these clans the sole

means of obtaining real proof is in visiting them personally, and then only is it possible to speak with authority.

One custom still remains to be described. It is that of blood-brotherhood.

In a wild and utterly lawless land such as Albania the custom is invaluable to personal safety. When once it is performed the "brothers" are bound to help each other, even to one sacrificing his life in defence of the other. Besides, the compliment is great. The procedure is as follows, and if it is not exactly the same, still closely resembles the ceremony of blood-brotherhood as once performed by the ancient Norsemen.

The two men stand out in a ring and bare their forearms; each makes an incision with a knife, the blood flowing into a cup of wine. With linked arms the cup is emptied—half by the one, half by the other—by the friends. A kiss concludes the compact, far more real to these men than our marriage-vow, "till death do us part."

It is a splendid custom even if barbaric; but the writer may be biassed, as he learnt to love these men for their many noble qualities.

They have far more ceremony in common everyday intercourse than any Western nation. A new-comer's first remark is an acknowledgment of his faith, which every one present answers with the prescribed formula. Then he greets those present, and is likewise responded to. To each he gives his hand, but it is not shaken,

merely clasped; to his friends he presents his cheek, not to be kissed, but for his friend to lay likewise his cheek against it. When a glass of spirits is given him, he does not drink it till he has first praised God and then wished good health to all present, both of which phrases are responded to by all.

A grave courtesy pervades the whole party, and the stranger in their midst cannot but wonder at the perfect manners these men display. Should his cigarette go out, prompt hands relight it for him; is the food ready for eating, he is the first to be served, and not till he has eaten his fill do his hosts begin. *En route*, over dangerous passes, where a step would be fatal, men risk their lives that no harm come to him: the writer has known them cling on the face of a precipice, making him a foothold with their hands when the way is steep or shelving.

There is no rude staring or impertinent inquiry, no molestation or roughness. In order to properly appreciate these virtues—for such indeed they deserve to be termed, in comparison with the rudeness shown by the lower classes to a conspicuous stranger in any of our large cities—it must be borne in mind that very many of these men have never seen a human being dressed in our quaint garb in their lives. A village may be visited by a stranger once in a generation, and not even the little children will show indecent curiosity.

But—and now the reverse of this idyllic picture must be

shown—should the traveller be observed making notes, taking photographs or measurements, then his life would be considerably endangered. The inborn suspicion of these hill-men would be aroused, and a plain request to leave their domains would assuredly follow, backed up by no hidden meanings. Immediate obedience would be enforced, or a bullet would certainly solve the difficulty.

Whilst the writer travelled in their midst, two things were rigidly impressed upon him. Firstly, never to be seen writing or sketching, and this the accompanying monk was equally debarred from doing. Secondly, to behave as a pious Roman Catholic throughout, which, as the writer does not belong to that faith, entailed much wearying attendance of Masses, long prayers on the mountains at eventide, and a constant attention never to betray himself by the omission of any little ceremonial. "Make the holy sign" was the good monk's most constant adjuration, before meals and after them, on passing wayside crosses or graves, or in answer to the various greetings and blessings bestowed upon him.

In spite of their seeming lack of curiosity, the Albanians are most keenly watchful, and when the writer saw a congregation prostrated upon the ground, imagining himself for the moment unnoticed, an omission of his called for a query afterwards which the monk was at pains to explain as a difference of ceremonial

observed by Roman Catholics in England.

The writer has an Austrian friend who in former years has travelled likewise in these lands, and even speaks Albanian. He tells of his attempt to scale the unknown heights of the Proclotia—the ancient “Damned Mountains” situated in the heart of the Clementi. It is said that no man has ever set foot on those rugged peaks, for, strangely enough, and for no apparent reason, the clansmen guard them jealously.

The Austrian with his escort succeeded in climbing half-way when the shepherds barred farther progress. In the parley which followed, one man covered, as if carelessly, the writer's friend with his rifle, and visibly toyed with the trigger. Had the rifle exploded, it would have been an “accident” in the eyes of the rest. The conversation, understood by the Austrian unknown to the hillmen, was an argument if it would not be safer to kill the stranger, and which only the energetic defence of the escort averted. The shepherds eventually withdrew, with the grim warning that if the journey was continued in the morning in an upward direction, the same fate which happened to other travellers the previous year would befall *all* of them. This cleared up the mystery regarding a party of tourists who had disappeared some time ago. Knowing this, the writer rather

naturally refrained from even proposing to ascend the forbidden mountains, under whose shadow he travelled many days, and which he would have dearly loved to climb.

It will be seen that travelling in Northern Albania is not a simple affair, and to intending tourists the writer gives the following advice: The journey must be carefully prepared beforehand on the borders themselves, and the friendship made of the horse-dealers and others who travel in other lands; but best and simplest is to go with the Franciscans.

It is the writer's firm conviction that in the immediate future the eyes of Europe will be centred on Albania, and that not for nothing do these barbaric but exceptionally intelligent clansmen view strangers with suspicion. The time is drawing near when at least two of the great Powers will have to seriously consider the Albanian problem, who are both vitally interested in its solution. It is a problem of such magnitude that the Macedonian Question sinks into insignificance beside it—to the initiated. These surmises, however, do not enter into the limit of this paper. If the writer has succeeded in enlightening any of his readers in the above lines, and awakening an interest in this unique yet so unknown and universally misunderstood people, he has not penned them in vain.

REGINALD WYON.

IN NESTING-TIME.

To even the town-dweller the return of spring brings some quickening of pulses and sense of awakening to a new and fuller life. It makes but little difference to the petted child of civilisation, to whom food and clothing, light and warmth, have been assured by the cunning contrivance of centuries of brains, yet the instincts of our remote ancestors still stir within us. To them it meant relief from famine, from darkness, cold, and physical miseries of all kinds. What wonder that they worshipped the sun-god, and fancied that when winter came their divinity was sick unto death, and rejoiced in his return to health and vigour as the sun gained strength? To them, to whom the promise of seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, had never reached, what wonder that the return of spring was looked on as a miracle?

The innate instinct of childhood to seize on all available nests may be traceable to the pleasure experienced by those ancestors in the first clutches of eggs of the season. After existing on acorns and beech-mast, or the mere skin and bone remaining of animal or bird after a protracted winter, the nest of the wild goose or duck must have seemed a godsend to them, and how intently would they have searched mere and woodland for the treasure. Untrammelled by law, Mosaic or

modern, they also grasped the opportunity to snare the parent bird on its nest, as the Samoyede of the far north does to this day. Probably in those far back days, when all the land lay untilled and undrained, the bird population was as much greater as the human was less; but in spite of the intrusion of man, there are still bird sanctuaries where their habits may be observed by those of unobtrusive presence and keen eyesight.

Passing down a moss-carpeted ride through the centre of a wide-stretching covert to avoid the dust and traffic of the highroad, my eye was attracted by the reflection of the setting sun on some gem-like object on the brown earth between the roots of the hazel-bushes. The eye being focussed discovered four such gems, and also that the apparent root by which they are shaded is a mother nightjar or fern-owl, with eyes veiled by the opal-coloured films through which she probably can see, but which add much to the protective advantages in simulating a stump or fallen branch. Whether the young ones are provided with this veil, or whether juvenile curiosity prevented its use, I am unable to say; but the bright eyes caused detection in this case, for the matching of shape and colour exhibited by the parent bird with the surroundings was perfect. I should have passed by

without disturbing the family party, but the return of an Irish terrier to my feet brought a crisis: the mother and chicks came upward by my face, keeping the same position relative to each other as on the ground; and, topping the hazel growth a little higher than my head, they parted, the young with fluttering, half-fledged wings, vanishing into the branches of the hazel to the ground some yards away, the old bird to tumble back into the ride, feigning to be wounded, and exhibiting all those theatrical performances so well known in the partridge and other ground-nesting birds, with the addition of lying on her back, with her mouth wide open as if for her last gasp, the widest stretch of a nightjar's mandible being no small measure! On being approached, the bird with regained wings glided away beyond sight and knowledge, and although sought for, was not discovered in the same neighbourhood again. That the young were lifted by the parent was the impression left on my mind. Can it be for this purpose that nature has provided the serrated claw of the middle toe of this species, to find a probable purpose for which has taxed the ingenuity of several generations of naturalists?—one theory being that the comblike appendage is to remove the scales and down of captured moths from the bristles at the base of the mandibles.

The missel-thrush is nesting in the very centre of the wood, although his food-supply comes

from the surrounding meadows and hill-pastures above, from which height he stoops with half-closed wings, rivalling the falcon in speed. A botanical friend once came to report that he had observed a small hawk which attacked birds of its own size, by driving them away when they settled on a certain hedge. This proved to be a missel-thrush, protecting his winter store of red haws on the thorn-bushes from redwing and fieldfare. He is a turbulent fellow, always seeming to enjoy an encounter, which character stands him in good stead as a protector of special fruit-laden hedge or holly-bush. I have often noted that he had a store at a time when other birds starve in the early spring, and so is prepared to build the earliest nests of the season. Once in passing by such a nest, I noticed a jackdaw prying around in search of eggs (of which, like his relative the hooded crow, he is an incorrigible robber), when suddenly the owner appeared and flew directly at him. The daw drew his grey pate down between his shoulders, after the manner a schoolboy takes to avoid the master's buffet on his ears; but the stroke was downward, and Jack turned an involuntary somersault. I thought him stunned for the moment, as, the inverted wings failing to support his weight, he dropped several feet; but recovering balance, he sailed away to an adjacent branch with the remark, "Jack, Jack!" as if making some mental reservation concerning the expediency

of a taste for missel-thrushes' eggs in the future.

Later in the season the young missel-thrushes are escorted by the parents to the open arable lands of the Downs, and with the best intentions destroy many acres of turnips whilst searching for the larvæ of the silver Y and heart-and-dart moths around the roots. No doubt their prey is destructive, but at the stage of plant growth when the crop is singled, or "set out in ones" (as an Irish hoer once explained it by way of showing that he understood the process), and often look drooping from the loss of support from the other plants which are removed from the rows to give the necessary room for expansion, the birds will frequently pull up hundreds of plants to find one of the tough-skinned larvæ for which they are searching.

The long-tailed titmouse inhabits the woodland throughout the year, in winter gaining a livelihood by continuous searching for the pupa stage of moth and butterfly in the crevices of the bark and embryo tree-buds. One would not notice them in the high oaks and fir-trees did they not, for the purpose of keeping together continually, utter a subdued sharp note. Many night-flying birds and forest-hunting beasts of prey are clamorous for the same reason. It is said the titmice congregate in winter to keep each other warm when roosting on a branch. It must be to gain advantage from each other's feathers, for the small amount of heat generated in so

tiny a body could hardly be perceptible. They are wanderers in winter, sleeping wherever night overtakes them, so that a bird once separated from the company would stand a poor chance of falling in with it again, were it not for that incessant gentle cry. Now the time of spring business has come, they have a place of rendezvous in the lichen-covered nest, most cunningly built to match with the adjacent tree-stem, and, having no further advantage from the cry, are silent, as they hunt with increased activity to satisfy the eight or ten large-mouthed young enclosed in a sphere the size of a Jaffa orange. How the weaker babes escape suffocation is a perpetual miracle. Long-tailed titmice certainly increase in number, although no doubt many do fall victims to the thorn of the shrike's larder, and also to supply the nursery of the omnivorous jay.

When crossing on horseback some meadows bounded by woodland, late in the nesting season, my attention was attracted to the fluttering of wings above my head, which proved to be those of a jay endeavouring to beat down some small bird in the same manner that a sparrow pursues a yellow-underwing or other moth, disturbed from its hiding-place in the daytime. Pursuer and pursued were alike oblivious of my presence, the latter by instinct trying to make for the shelter of a clump of brambles, the jay trying to head it off into the open field, so as to weary out the newly

fledged wings; but the smaller bird turned and twisted in quicker time than the larger, and reached its goal, but, alas! was caught by a hooked bramble thorn, and checked in entering the sanctuary, where it would have been quite safe from molestation. This misadventure gave the jay its opportunity, and with one blow of his strong conical beak he cleft the soft skull of the young chaffinch, for such the victim proved to be, with the grey fluff of innocence, which Kearton has exhibited so admirably in photography, still upon him. It was a heartless deed, but might have the same excuse as that credited to Cromwell on visiting the remains of Charles I. the night after his execution, "Cruel necessity," for well hidden in some bush is the nest with its five or six hungry young jays clamouring for the nourishment which it is the parents' bounden duty to provide. During the excitement of pursuit the jay had not noticed a human presence; but although he now became aware of it, he was not in the least disconcerted, for, turning his prize on to its back with deft care, the wings were folded across the breast so as to prevent them from catching the air during transit, and thus impeding flight, and taking a firm grip of the whole with his substantial bill, he is away to divide the spoil among his family with all the pride of a victor, before making a raid on a garden of green peas in the opposite direction. The mental capacity of this bird was once well tested and explained to

me by a man whose crops suffered from these beautiful blue-winged thieves. He said if one man went into hiding to lay wait to exterminate the marauders with a gun, they avoid the spot. Should two go to the ambush, and one return, the result is the same; but should three go together and two come back, the calculation is beyond the jay's capacity, and the ruse usually proves successful.

A peewit crosses above the woodland with mournful cry, passing to its feeding-ground on the wet pastures beyond from the higher fields where his nest is situated. He must miss the companionship of the sentinel redshank in these inland haunts. On the marsh-lands near the coast a pair of each variety of bird appear, by nesting close together, to form a mutual protection society, the wary redshank giving notice of approaching danger, while the lapwing beats off their most persistent enemy, the carrion crow. When inspecting some cattle on the Essex coast, the "looker" (as the herdsman is there called) told me of this curious theory, and being anxious to obtain some eggs of the redshank, I determined to keep a good look-out for facts demonstrating its proof. Good fortune lent its aid, for on crossing one of those wave-like, undulating ridges, no doubt formed by some back-water in an old river estuary before the land was reclaimed by seawall and sluice, a redshank emerged from a tuft of coarse grass just below me, giving a

quick, downward, screw-like motion to its wings, thereby forming a wisp which completely concealed the nest and eggs. On the latter being handed up by the marshman, I inquired, "Now, where is the peewit's nest?" "There — under your horse, sir," was the reply; and glancing down below my stirrup, there lay the eggs, olive, blotted with black, of the common plover.

The long-tailed titmouse ceases his altruistic cry at this season; the cuckoo, on the contrary, adopts its well-known call at nesting-time, which term must be applied with another meaning to these vagrant birds,—their nesting resembles in some degree that of the schoolboy, although the incentive is not always predatory! The loud clear note is that of the male bird, uttered with the design to notify his proximity to any female chancing to wander within a mile or two of his presence. What a strange freak of nature is their mode of life, when compared with all other birds of the British Isles! Tied down by no duties of incubation to one spot, they are able to indulge in a Bohemian life, untrammelled by household cares, their eggs being deposited so that their progeny may become parasites on other members of the community. Are these looked upon as children of the State? They seem to be born—or shall we say hatched—beggars. I have seen a well-fledged specimen fly along the edge of a deep ravine bordered by a belt of pasture, and take

toll of parent birds, whose own hungry nestlings were clamouring in adjacent bushes. A hen-robin, the cry of whose own brood I could distinctly hear, resented the importunity of the young vagabond; but the posturing with wide-open mouth and drooped wings seemed so irresistible that a beakful of insects and worms, the result of several minutes' toil, was dropped into the gaping red throat. A hedge-sparrow collecting food upon the same meadow raised no objection to being imposed upon; but this might have been the foster-parent continuing its nurture to the supplanter of her own brood. The strangest part of the whole anomalous proceeding, the ejection of the legitimate occupiers of the nest, has become an oft-told tale. I once adopted the theory that the two hind-toes of the zygodactyle feet of this species lent their aid to this instinctive crime, by enabling the young murderer to cling to the side of the nest while ousting the lawful occupiers. I find, however, that Wilson, the great American ornithologist, has suspected the like habit in the cow-bunting, a bird of the Sturnidæ or starling family with but one strong hind-toe. They, like the cuckoo, do not pair, as nest-building birds so generally do.

I have noticed, the proportion of sexes varies remarkably among cuckoos, having watched the pursuit by four or five male birds of one female amongst the green feathery foliage of the ash-trees, her rippling

laughter being answered by a chorus of loud shouts. On another occasion eleven cuckoos were seen together: only one of these was heard to utter his well-known note, which call is the only intimation of sex to the field-naturalist. One could not recognise any peculiarity of voice that should have attracted so large a following; but the whole party had a contented appearance, as if moths and locust-flies were abundant. The hawk-like form and flight of the cuckoo frequently causes it to be mobbed by small birds: this usually occurs late in nesting-time, when fledglings are plentiful, and parent-birds alert for their protection. In early spring the hen-bird, skulking along the hedge-side in search of a snug nest in which to plant her eggs, escapes almost unnoticed.

One June day, when fishing for trout on the north side of the watershed of the Cheviots, in Capehope burn,—which joins Kale Water at Hownam, to pass from thence into the Teviot and flow on into the Tweed,—I noticed two cuckoos come flying down the valley. The one was calling loudly some thirty feet from the ground, the other skimming

along the burn-side and creating distraction among the birds nesting in that favourite resort. The sandpiper descended from the stone dyke and increased his vociferous pipings; tree-pipit, yellow-hammer, and meadow-pipit joined with pied and yellow wagtails in the chase. A water-ousel, or dipper as it is often called, was perched on a projecting stone mid-stream, posturing, as is their wont, with droop of head and jerk of tail. I had watched on many occasions to see one take a dive into the stream, for they had been my cheerful companions for many a day on Border waters; but until the hawk-like form of the cuckoo passed above, and maybe was reflected in the pool below, the header was never taken. Under the influence of fear a passage was made beneath the surface to the overhanging bank. As these cuckoos were the only birds of that species sighted during a residence covering the whole of the month of June in Cheviot valleys, they were evidently regarded as birds of prey, and not suspected of the malicious intent of depositing embryo aliens among lawful citizens of the valley.

ERNEST ROBINSON.

IN THE KOOTENAYS.

YOU walk into the hotel at Sicamous Junction from the platform of the railway-station, and you will probably find the hall full of gun-cases, cartridge-magazines, fishing-rods, and golf-clubs. The dining-room is a glitter of flowers and silver, lit up by acetylene lamps. The verandah at the back overhangs an arm of the Great Shuswap Lake; underneath it is moored a small flotilla of boats and canoes; a little farther out is a house-boat with its attendant steam-tug. Just across the arm, within rifle-shot of the verandah, is a small clump of willows, easily distinguishable in the moonlight. A couple of weeks before our arrival they picked up, in those willows, an Indian hunter, with his scalp half torn off and his arm badly lacerated by a grizzly. He had been hunting bears for forty years, but one of them got him at last; for he had been lying there twenty-four hours when they found him, and blood-poisoning had set in. I do not mean to infer that guests can hope to sit out on verandah-chairs and shoot grizzlies as a rule,—although within two and a half miles of the hotel there is a regular path, worn as smooth as a macadamised road, with stones turned over, where the bears have been hunting for ants,—but the incident is an illustration of the manner in which high civilisation treads on the heels of untamed nature in British Columbia.

The distance from Sicamous to Okanagan Landing is fifty-one miles, and we managed to lose two hours in making it. Nobody complained particularly, because the train only runs three times a-week, and the steamer could not possibly start without us. Besides that, it was a lovely day, and sitting on the rear platform of the car made the journey resemble a drive along a dusty country road, between gently rising hills, and beside flat, calm, shining lakes, where the ducks and coots left long wakes on the mirror-like surface. The waggoners chaffed us now and then, and we stopped dead occasionally to hoot at a stray calf that had wandered on to the railway-line, and was too stupid to get out of the way of the engine. But we managed to get along somehow, and it is libellously untrue to say that it was the same calf which stopped us near Enderby bridge, and then again ten miles farther on. We were all suffering a little from "coast languor," one of the principal symptoms of which malady is that you "don't care a cent whether school keeps or not."

By the time we arrived at the landing-stage everybody on the train knew everybody else, and they always keep a lot of fishing-tackle on the wharf, with live bait in a tin-lined box covered by an old sack, so that the passengers can amuse themselves while they are wait-

ing for the steamer to start. The water was the most brilliant transparent green I ever saw, and the silver trout were swimming about in myriads: it was exactly like an aquarium. Close to the surface were the babies of the tribe, hurrying backwards and forwards in schools, keeping very near together for company's sake; lower down were the big fish, who run up to 16 lb. or 20 lb. The verandahs of the cottages were all covered with blue convolvulus; and a herd of cattle was feeding in the meadow at the head of the lake, under the sunlit hill.

The lake itself is some sixty miles in length, and nowhere more than three or four broad, so that it really resembles a river lying between two tiers of hills; the water, after you leave the landing, being a deep Mediterranean blue, and the mountains green and restful after the chaotic grandeur of the Rockies. The *Aberdeen* could do her seventeen knots if she were hurried, but we very much preferred to glide along quietly, leaning back on deck-chairs in the soft warm air. By-and-by the whistle screamed out a long, echoing call, and we slowed up at a tiny wharf, and landed a bag of flour and a whisky-jar for a dark, Italian-faced prospector who was waiting there—a packing-case, and a hammock slung between a couple of trees, being the only signs of human habitation visible. Next time we stopped and threw a brown-paper parcel on to an empty landing-stage that ran out from a flattened

beach, behind which was a background of groves and isolated trees with lawny spaces between. As we steamed off, we saw a straw-hatted girl, in a white skirt and pink skirt-waist, walking down a winding path; and then we rounded the shoulder of a smooth grassy cliff, to a low-lying bright green shore, with a village of white-and-yellow houses and a grey-roofed church inland.

The water near the edge was lapping up a beach of fine white sand; the dock was piled high with flour-bags and fruit-boxes; two or three skewbald bronchos with Mexican saddles were standing at the street corner; the men were dressed in khaki Norfolk jackets, loose white flannel shirts open at the throat, great wide-brimmed hats of white linen, and blue jean trousers tucked into high, rusty-black boots. Some of them reminded you of Piccadilly, in spite of the sun-burn on their cheeks; and others, in brown velveteen coats, with tarnished buttons of strange device, might have just stepped out of a gig in the marketplace of a country town. There was a long regular line of poplars farther inland, that you would have sworn was the avenue leading up to a manor-house: it had really been planted to serve as a wind-break for somebody's orchard. Now and then, but very rarely, the thermometer in winter will drop to 10° below zero, a record of which they seem to be rather proud here; but, as a rule, "fifteen

above" is the coldest, and little damage is done except to young trees.

We waited at Kelowna for an hour and a half, and then we sailed out into a blue world, where blue hills were shimmering in blue haze above an azure bay. The trees grew right down to the water's edge, here and there in the lake itself, and we slanted from stopping-place to stopping-place across an oily plain of dark, shining water. We dropped mail-bags and watched the postmaster's children, in broken-brimmed straw hats, sorting the letters on the landing-stage. There was an aromatic smell of burning wood below Peachland, and the smoke was hanging about the surface of the lake. The western shore, with its faint, yellow-green herbage, looked like a vast wind-swept sand-hill, carven into mounds and hollows, over which the fir-trees were thinly scattered, and down the face of the steep hills behind were scored the dry beds of long waterfalls.

It was moonlight before we arrived at Penticton and climbed up a narrow path to the hotel. Tall men, in cowboy hats and clanking spurs, passed us in the darkness, and half a dozen bronchos were tied up to posts and empty waggon at the top of the hill. There was a "general store" hidden away among the trees in a deep dell behind the inn, where two or three miners were pricing saddlery by the light of petroleum-lamps. The officers of the ship and most of the

passengers took possession of the drawing-room and the piano, and sang Old Country songs; outside on the verandah the night breeze was moaning fitfully, and the wraiths of all sorts of dead hopes and vain longings seemed to flit down from the mountain glens over the shadowy surface of the lake.

For sheer pleasure, where travelling is concerned, it is hard to beat the deck of a lake steamer on a hot summer day. There is just enough breeze off the water to keep you cool; you are in the fresh air, with plenty of room to move about; you have all the pleasures of an ocean voyage, with very little fear of seasickness, and you have the added delight of constantly changing scenery. On our return journey we stopped at orchards and market-gardens where the wharves were crowded with gaily dressed women and white-clothed Chinamen, waiting to ship cargoes of fruit-boxes; of peaches, and plums, and grapes, and water-melons, and tomatoes. The fruit-growing industry is still in its infancy here. One of our fellow-passengers was an Englishman, with fifteen years' experience in California, who had come up here, as superintendent of a "packing gang," to see what the country was like, and he asserted enthusiastically that they "hadn't begun to grow fruit yet," and that, with scientific methods of cultivation, he could in two years double the produce of an

orchard that was already equal to anything he had seen across the border. Indeed it was difficult to see why everybody does not buy land, plant trees, and make a fortune; because the inhabitants prove to you by facts and figures that you must inevitably make about eighty per cent per annum on your capital. "There must be a nigger in the fence somewhere," said a Manitoba farmer to me; "but I'm hanged if I can find him. Apparently all these fellows do is to spray their trees three times a-year and watch them growing. They don't even pick the fruit themselves—the wholesale buyers contract to do that; and the owners, if they feel energetic, hire themselves out at \$1.75 a-day to pick their own fruit. If I say that the only flaw in the proposition is that it's too good to be true, they invite me to point out where they're wrong, and I can't do it." We worried over the problem all the way to Okanagan Landing, and finally decided that, with scientific attention and a certain outlay on irrigation where necessary, a fruit-rancher should be able to make a living without working himself to death.

There was a lake of gold, reflecting the dried yellow grass on the mountain-side, as the train wound along the shore towards Sicamous, with only a few feet of shingle and driftwood between us and the water. A flock of duck got up and swung past a big bold bluff that loomed up like a whale's back, narrowing the

lake arm to the width of a small river; and a long-haired Indian brave in semi-civilised clothing was riding a broncho down the hillside, with his squaw behind, riding astride, with her moccasined feet tucked into wide wooden stirrups.

The Arrow Lakes, as they are called, like the Okanagan, are practically the expansion of a river, in this case the Columbia. They run through mountain-passes, steeper and more precipitous than the Okanagan ranges, with denser forests and wilder scenery. At first they strike you as being a little formidable, like an imperious beauty to whom you have been introduced by a lovely young sister; but the charm of them captivates you insensibly, till you begin to dread the idea of bidding them farewell. Among the passengers on the upper deck were an Alpine-Club man, lean, brown, and sinewy, who had spent the summer conquering virgin peaks in the Rockies; another, who is studying Canada for sporting purposes, from Nova Scotia to Cassiar; and a couple of English ladies who were travelling round the world. They had taken 1400 photographs in sixteen months, and they talked of head-hunters in the Celebes, and of untrodden paths in Ceylon, with easy familiarity, and with a remarkable power of vivid description. Before the steamer started the cook appeared on deck with two or three specimens of ore in his hand from some newly discovered claim, and we began to feel that we

were really in a mining country at last.

At Halcyon Hot Springs there was a big yellow hotel pasted on to the face of the hill, with a kitchen-garden below that looked as if it was growing up the side of a wall, and a strong, close fence underneath that, to prevent the whole affair from sliding bodily into the lake. A Montana man looked at it curiously, and drawled out, "I wonder what in thunder they do here when they want to do anything!" At Nakusp there was an enormous flat scow, labelled, "C. P. R. barge No. 4," with half a dozen railway cars loaded on it, and a small steam-tug waiting to tow it down to Robson. As the lake narrowed the water turned to a vivid absinthe green, and the pale leaves of the cottonwood on the shore contrasted with the darker pines on the mountains behind. There was the blue smoke of a fire to the right of us, and we seemed to be steaming in dead silence—except for the quiet, sighing puff of the engines—right against huge granite walls in front. Then the pass widened again into deep, leafy hollows embayed on either shore, and then contracted to a river running between trees, whose foliage was just assuming tints of exquisite brown, and red, and yellow: there was a little sand-spit running out at the narrowest point, with a white boat moored alongside, and deep gutters were clawed down the face of the wall ahead. Another barrier of ragged, snow-patched, grey-brown rock, and we were steaming across from side to

side to avoid the shoals; with the hurrying water, wrinkled like the skin-folds on the palm of the hand, beneath us, and a warm head-wind blowing from the south. On a long green island, fringed with yellow sand, was a canvas teepee, and a band of ponies was staring at us from the bank; on the farther shore was a flock of forty or fifty grey geese drawn up on the shingle. Somebody wantonly fired a rifle at them, and they got up and swung off down stream, for the wildfowl never cross the range, but follow the trough of the lake. Then a fish-hawk dropped with a swoop, and picked up a fish close to our bows; by-and-by the mountains grew rounder and less rugged, and the vegetation on the shores denser and greener, while the water turned to the blue of turquoise. Near Robson we could see the railway pinned up on the side of the cliff, 1100 feet or more above lake-level; once we passed a log shanty among the trees, with a tin-sponge-bath hung against the wall outside, and everybody spoke at once, "I'll bet that's an Englishman living there;" another time we saw a town of 150 houses or more in a sandy bay, and the man who knew Canada from the Atlantic to the Pacific said, "That's quite a settlement, isn't it? If you want a house cheap, now is your chance." For—though the houses were complete, even to the doors and windows—there was only one inhabitant in the entire city; and we subsequently heard that he too had since departed. It was a

"boom" town, built at a time when the railway company was constructing a big tunnel near by, and before the "bottom had dropped out of" certain mining prospects in the neighbourhood. It would be an eerie place to walk into at night after you had lost your way on the mountain. The sun went down in a pink haze, from the forest fires, and, after dark, we lit the great electric search-lights, and flung long, straight, dazzling shafts on either shore. The startled birds flew across their path like living flames, and we swung the lamps round so as to illuminate the yellow sand and thick green foliage behind, while the Chinamen on board chattered joyfully to see the gigantic shadows of their own fingers on the glittering surface of the lake.

The railway journey that followed, from Robson to Rossland, was like a trip up the Brocken on a Walpurgis Night. There were fires everywhere: fire in the forests, and fire in the smelters; walls of incandescence on one side, and flaming furnaces on the other; a lurid glow behind, and a sparkle of cresset-lights ahead; the Red Mountain, the nucleus of the Rossland mines, was ablaze with long festoons of arc-lamps; the very town itself appeared to be illuminated for some high festival. They get their power from the Bonnington Falls, thirty-two miles away, at the lower end of the connecting-link between the Kootenay Lake and the Columbia River. The pole-line runs over a ragged route, with

hardly a level mile in the entire distance, ascending and descending grades of 70 per cent of steepness, and varying in its altitude at different points by over 2200 feet. It jumps the Kootenay River in a single span of 600 feet, and the Columbia in another of 1500 feet, including a sag of 52 feet in the total stretch. Electric lighting is so cheap in Rossland that they never bother to turn it out, except in their bedrooms. You could walk into a man's office at midday and see that his lamps were all alight; the shop windows were as bright at three o'clock in the morning as those of an ordinary town an hour after sunset.

By daylight the scene changed. The main street had been hewn, and blasted, and levelled along the side of a hill high above a green valley, where the tall straight pines looked like Swiss toys, with a network of little railways running up to and ending at a hole in the ground. The offices and other buildings of the great mines, the Le Roi, the Le Roi No. 2, the Centre Star, the War Eagle, were perched up like châteaux on the face of the Red Mountain, and the railway cork-screwed and switch-backed up a rise of a couple of thousand feet in seventeen miles. The shops were full of strange-looking machinery and miner's requisites—the foot-gear that hung outside would make an ordinary pair of shooting-boots look like dress-shoes; there were comparatively few women on the streets; and you could

tell the men who worked underground at a glance by the strange pallor on their faces.

Right in the middle of one of the side-streets, and almost blocking it, was a gigantic boulder of virgin rock, at least 12 feet high, with a crack in it stuck full of wooden wedges. When the town council has a few dollars to spare it chips a few more bits off it, meanwhile it is artistically decorated with flaring posters. The club is a balconied chalet, perched high, like everything else here, on the side of a hill, with four tables in the billiard-room, a reading-room that overlooks the valley below, and great china bowls full of dahlias and sweet-peas everywhere.

Rossland is getting civilised now, though there is still something of the old reckless, devil-may-care spirit of the mining camp in the air. A very few years ago everything "ran wide open," till the respectable citizens held a meeting and resolved to set their house in order. Their chief difficulty lay in the fact that they had no powers to legislate, and could not get these without the sanction of the Provincial Legislature at Victoria. So they elected a certain number of delegates, whom they christened "The Committee of Purity and Reform," voted them \$200 apiece for their expenses, and despatched them to the seat of Government, with instructions not to return without the necessary authority for establishing a jurisdiction of their own.

They travelled by way of the

States, and by the time they had arrived at a certain town, which shall be nameless, the \$200 was beginning to burn a hole in their pockets. The mayor and corporation turned out to meet them, and offered them "the hospitality of Our City"; the mayor had already been sampling the said hospitality himself. His eloquence was so persuasive that the C. of P. and R. boarded the night train in a condition of wild hilarity, and took possession of the Pullman. The chairman of the committee, who related the incident, said that one of their number was a Scotsman, who always waxed sentimental under the influence of whisky. "He insisted on reciting a poem. It was a d—d long one, beginning 'The stag at eve had drunk his fill,' and he insisted on giving us the whole of it. He also stopped at intervals to draw attention to the beauties of particular passages, with elucidatory comments of his own. Whenever he thought any particular passenger was not paying sufficient attention, he would go and sit on the arm of his chair and recite to him personally. Why the other passengers didn't throw us all off the train, I shall never know. We compared notes subsequently about our recollections of the interview with the Legislative Assembly at Victoria, but they were a trifle too mixed for a clear report of the proceedings. Still, we had the powers of legislation all right, right there, in our pockets. We had legislation to burn. Because, you see, the

members of the Provincial Parliament said, 'If this is the Committee of Purity and Reform, good Lord! *what must the ordinary citizens be like?*'"

I met an old schoolfellow in the club that night, who had spent five years in acquiring experience in Rossland, and we debated on the advisability of paying a visit to the Le Roi mine. R. knew that he would have no difficulty in getting the necessary permission to go all over it, if we liked; but my time was limited, and there is always the risk of being personally conducted by an intelligent foreman. This personage invariably makes the mistake of taking it for granted that everybody else is as intelligent as himself, and he holds you for three or four hours while he explains everything with a painstaking attention to detail and a bewildering technicality that gives you a headache. Your politeness and your personal vanity prevent you from cutting him short. Finally we decided to take chances, and the next day saw a couple of disreputable tramps, in soiled flannels and enormous shooting-boots, climbing up a steep, dusty path between little wooden cottages in whose doorways stood pale-faced, profane men, just up from their spell underground.

The buildings, and plant generally, of the mine are on a scale that the local experts hold to be somewhat extravagant in view of the expense involved in putting its produce on the market. As far as I

could gather, ore of a less value than \$9½ per ton will not pay under present conditions, and most of the ore now in sight at the Rossland mines is trembling on the ragged edge between profit and loss. Any substantial abatement of the cost of reduction would turn the scale, and ensure permanent prosperity for the place as a mining camp. Even as it is, there is enough wealth in the town itself, and its mineral returns are sufficiently valuable, to ensure the employment of a thousand miners or more for years to come.

I asked a good many authorities—Canadian, English, and American, mine-owners, bank managers, and others—why the results of British Columbia mining had hitherto been so disappointing to British investors. The general consensus of opinion seemed to be that there were faults on both sides. Some of the propositions that have been laid before English capitalists have been rank swindles. Money that should have been carefully spent on directly productive work out here has been wasted on elaborate machinery and decorative buildings, where the returns did not justify the outlay. On the other hand, the men on the spot complain that the tendency of English speculators is to dribble out their money in small sums,—a fatal policy where mining is concerned. Your American will make a big dash, and then, if he fails, drop it altogether,

and start afresh elsewhere. They say, too, that, instead of selecting trained business representatives, people at home have an idea that the management of a mine is a snug berth for a younger son who has been plucked for Sandhurst. Also, that, generally speaking, they are in too much of a hurry. Low-grade ore has to be treated on an enormous scale, and the larger the capacity of the plant, provided that it is economically managed, the greater the profit. There are innumerable claims showing high-grade ore, especially in the Boundary Country, which are merely awaiting capital to develop them. While I was in Greenwood one man, who had leases and a bond on one property inside the city limits for \$10,000, had, after nine months' work, sold his property for \$50,000. A second property, also in the city limits, bonded at \$10,000, and now being worked by two or three men, had just completed a shipment of 38 tons, and for this had received over \$4000. "But," said a certain bank manager to me, "what we want here is hard work, and men ready to go up against natural conditions. For years properties have been lying idle, either because there are not enough men who will take chances of working, or because there is not enough capital to put men to work on the various claims." There have been local drawbacks, too, labour troubles, the drop in copper, lack of railway accommodation, the curse of mono-

polies, and other evils which will be remedied in time.

To return to the Le Roi. The mine is opened out by two incline shafts on the middle vein—the old shaft and the "combination" shaft. Above the latter is reared a shaft-house 85 feet high, with crushing, conveying, sorting, and sampling machinery, all driven by electric power, and an aerial tram-line leads to the ore-bins on the Great Northern Railway. There are two double-cylinder winding engines that work the hoist-reels, and are capable of hoisting 1200 tons in ten hours if necessary. The shaft has reached the 1050-foot level, though 900 feet was the deepest stage in actual working at the time of our visit. Each of us took a candle, lit it, and held it between his fingers, with the grease dripping off. Then we stepped through a door into the diagonal section of a tin box, big enough to hold three men. The two visitors crowded well up to the back of it, and the guide turned an electric switch on and off a certain number of times, somewhat on the principle of the Morse code. Then there was the sensation of a trap-door being opened, and we dropped through. At the different stations on the way down we seemed to be looking through a penny peep-show at artificial caves lit by electricity, with moving figures hurrying little hand-cars filled with ore along a miniature railway. When we finally disembarked we noticed that the air was perfectly sweet, and our conductor showed us

that there was a telephone in connection with the offices above, as well as with the bedroom in his own cottage. All round was a forest of massive timbers propping up the enormous weight above. One or two of the huge piles had been squeezed till the strain had become unbearable, and they had begun to crack and splinter outwards in the middle. The carpenters were busy fortifying the weak places with wedges. Little tram-lines ran along corridors connecting with pockets into which the ore was emptied, and from which the skip was loaded and hoisted to the surface. There wasn't a sign of gold, or of anything remotely resembling it, in sight.

On the surface we saw a beautiful model of a gold-bearing vein on a small scale. This was a stringer, or feeder, of the North vein, which had just been opened up to a depth of about 5 feet, apparently more out of curiosity than from any immediate intention to begin serious work there. The vein could be seen, clear, distinct, and glittering, running through the rusty red of the "country" rock for a few feet, till it had narrowed almost to vanishing point, or "pinched," to use the technical expression. Here they had sunk a miniature shaft, and found it again in the hanging-wall; and at the "pit's mouth" was a waggon-load of ore averaging \$60 to the ton.

All the mines of any importance are on the Red Mountain—which is red, and green, and patched with trees, and blotched with smoke, and

scarred with tall black chimneys, and seamed with long perpendicular hoists. You may climb to the topmost peak of any of the surrounding hills, and, as far as the eye can see, the country has probably been taken up at some time or other by enterprising prospectors, many of whom have since died, or gone elsewhere and been forgotten. Many of the claims overlap one another, and there is a chance for litigation if the country ever gets thoroughly opened up. For the prospector penetrates everywhere: whether he travels in state with a string of pack-horses, or alone, with no more provisions than he can carry himself, including a small bottle from the chemist's shop, known as "The Prospector's Friend"—to be used when all hope of rescue is gone.

Forty years ago, when the placer mines in East Kootenay were first discovered, there was no connection between this district and the coast except through the United States. Mr E. Dewdney, afterwards Lieut. - Governor of British Columbia, was instructed to survey and construct a trail entirely within British territory, in order to avoid the vexatious delay at the customs. This trail, still known as the Dewdney Trail, was finished in 1865, and passes about a mile south of Rossland on its way down Trail Creek to the Columbia River. Other roads have been built since, and to-day the old trail is so overgrown in many places that you have to ride along it in

single file, and to dodge fallen trees, or even to leave it altogether to avoid water-holes. Here and there you catch glimpses of deep wooded valleys through the trees; and an occasional peep of the railway reminds you that you are within reach of civilisation. Otherwise it is in much the same condition as when first constructed. Barring an occasional chipmunk, there were no signs of animal life, although there are deer and bear in the woods. The last mile into Trail was about the dustiest I ever experienced, for the vegetation had been killed off by the sulphur fumes from the smelter. My guide, after advising me to keep a hundred yards behind him, started off at full gallop, and disappeared bodily in a pillar of yellow sand.

The smelter is built on a bluff overlooking the swift-eddying torrent of the milky-green Columbia River. Although at the time of its erection the difficulties of procuring building material and importing plant and machinery were far greater than would be the case to-day, yet work was begun on October 10, 1895, and the first furnace fired up in the following February. On one bank of the river is a wilderness of trestlework; of huge wooden sheds, and pythonic iron pipes; of chimneys 200 feet high and 12 feet square; of great "roasters" and ovens built of brick; and blast-furnaces; and baths of molten metal. Grimy-faced stokers, with the strange glassy stare

of men who gaze into volcanoes of white heat, were pushing barrows carrying big pots full of "matte": in the office buildings were glass cupboards containing specimens of ore, and sulphur bloom, and clinker "hair" that might have been cut from a human head; and mineral sea-anemones of yellow, and heliotrope, and orange-red. Just outside the laboratory was a spectacled, clean-shaven professor in his shirt-sleeves, superintending the unloading of lead bullion, and through the windows you could see studious-looking youths examining test-tubes.

On the farther side, under the red, pine-studded hills, is a gravelled beach; and, exactly opposite, is the little shack of an Indian hunter, among the trees.

Next morning the sun was a beautiful pale lilac, that subsequently deepened into a brilliant blue, through the mingled haze of the chimneys and of the forest fires; and enormous clouds of rolling smoke lay along the valleys. The railway seemed to descend by a spiral staircase, varied by an occasional switchback: now and then we stopped under bins from which the falling ore rained into the cars like a cataract. The leaves, and bracken, and fern were beginning to change colour; and peeps of the river showed far below us, edged with yellow gravel. We crossed deep gorges on high, spidery-looking trestles; we ran through short rough-hewn tunnels; from the low valleys the forests

of pine and fir swelled and undulated like the trough of a tidal wave; and above our heads the great crags seemed to close together till they shut out the sky. Near Coryell you could lean over the edge of the platform and stare straight up a sheer wall a mile in length, that left only a thin blue line between you and the roof of the railway-car. We lunched at tables fragrant with sweet-peas, while Lake Christina seemed to glide by like a smoky mirror, with shimmering reflections of the mountains on its surface: there was a tiny creek a yard wide cutting through a strip of sandy shore, and then forming a baby delta with half a dozen 6-inch channels and an infant marsh just inland,—a perfect reproduction on a small scale of the great rivers that empty themselves into the northern lakes; so that you could almost imagine a liliputian hunter paddling a nutshell therein, and shooting mosquitoes on the wing.

Then more trestles, and an island-studded river beneath them, its water clear and sparkling, after the glacier-fed Columbia; and, farther on, a flat plain between the hills, with black-and-white ducks paddling on the lakelets, and Holstein cattle to match, standing in the lush grass on their shores. We saw wheat-stubble again here, and acres of vegetable gardens, with huge sun-flowers blazing in their midst, and a racecourse and a grand stand among the meadows. Higher up the valley grew wilder, and the river narrowed

down to a mere gutter between stripes of ochreous sand: in front of us was a steep red cliff, with tall trees at regular intervals apparently marching up its flank, and the water beneath was mottled with brown and green patches. On the face of another cliff, near the summit, was a great stain of red rust, the mark of a volcanic mine of iron mixed with copper, which has been tunnelled deep, though the main body of ore has not yet been found. Then we passed through a burnt forest, with straight, black, pointed spears, so thin and charred that we wondered they could still stand upright, and a jungle of underbrush and little green saplings two or three feet high; and after that we ran along a shelf of loose shingle down whose precipitous slope the pebbles trickled continuously for hundreds of feet to the valley below.

We stopped at a town that is going through the inevitable period of reaction after a boom. As a railway opens up a country every mining camp through which it passes becomes for a time a "terminal point," and enjoys a brief period of inflated prosperity. When the work of construction moves on, taking with it the gangs of labourers and the camp-followers that accompany them, there ensues a spell of depression. You see houses with broken windows, and tattered notices of board and lodging peeling off their doors; old theatrical posters dated months back; hotels with the blinds down; and deserted offices

whose dusty floors are littered with tattered papers, and torn envelopes, and backless ledgers. The storekeepers detain you long in conversation, even though you are only buying a few ounces of tobacco. The streets are empty, save for a few half-starved dogs and an occasional miner on a ewe-necked pony; and about 6 P.M. you will hear the strains of the Salvation Army band, consisting of one woman, two men, and a boy with a banner.

But three or four London millionaires arrived yesterday to look after some mining interests, and all day long the blasting cannonade of the dynamite from the surrounding hills will shake you in your chair on the hotel verandah. Two or three girls pass with lawn-tennis racquets in their hands, and you wonder where on earth they can find ground flat enough to play on; the parson lopes by, sitting loose in his Mexican saddle, with his surplice and cassock rolled up behind him, and the young engineer from Camborne hails him to come in and have a drink, bidding a Chinese boy go out and hold the horse. For the Chinaman is everywhere in British Columbia, meek and industrious, but also subtle and determined. Sometimes he is stung into unexpected retaliation by the ceaseless chaff he has to undergo, and then he is apt to astonish his persecutors. There was an American miner once who undertook to tell a Chinaman that his room was preferable to his company—

at all events in the U.S.A. When he had finished his remarks—and his peroration was pyrotechnic—the guileless Celestial looked at him and said—

“That all li.” (That’s all right.) “Chinaman no b’long here. ‘Melican man he say to Chinaman, ‘You no b’long here; you go back your own countly,’ and Chinaman he go back. Bimeby Hishman he tell ‘Melican man, ‘You no b’long here; this my countly. You go back.’ Then where in h—l ‘Melican man he go to?’”

The stage came rattling down the street, with its parti-coloured team of ponies, looking like the advance-guard of a circus. The driver used a broken-backed whip with about ten feet of lash hanging from the handle, and I wondered how on earth he managed to touch up his leaders. I am still wondering, because for the first half of the journey he restricted his attentions to the off-wheeler, and then he got the lash hung up in a tree, and was reduced to using the handle as a goad. The trail zigzagged up the side of a mountain; at times our off-wheels were scraping the side of a wall a few hundred feet high, while the near ones were within an inch of a precipice that needed a steady head to look down it. We had a couple of lady passengers in front, who sat very stiff and straight till their nerves began to go, and a common peril made them talk to one another. Behind them was a jovial ruffian who hung his legs over the side and went to

sleep with a fat black cigar in his mouth. Wherever there was a hundred yards on the level or downhill the driver uttered a wild yell and sent his horses along for all they were worth, and I was not sorry when we turned from the mountain-side into a great pine-forest, and drove for miles along a dusty track under the giant trees. The first sign that we were reaching a settlement was a bank of empty tins. If any virtuoso ever takes it into his head to form a collection of cans of preserved meats, or fruits, or vegetables, I fancy that he could find specimens of every existent variety about a mile outside Phoenix, British Columbia. The town itself was

a surprise, and the sight of a railway-station came on one like a shock: it seemed so out of place after an ascent of a couple of thousand feet from the valley below. Our business there was finished in a few hours, and then we walked back in the gloaming; scrambling down short cuts from point to point; ploughing through dust, and tripping over rolling stones, till we realised why miners always wear high boots with clump soles and gigantic nails. The sky was a pale blue, with ragged, luminous-edged clouds; the stars were very bright, and the jagged cliffs shone in the moonlight like oxidised silver.

CHAS. HANBURY-WILLIAMS.

TO SPRING ; OR, ABOUT THE MYTHS OF THE ANCIENTS.

BY GIACOMO LEOPARDI.

Translated by Sir Theodore Martin, K.C.B.

EVEN as the Sun repairs
 The havoc winter's skies have wrought,
 And even as Zephyr quickens into life
 The languid breezes, making so the gloom
 Of leaden clouds break up, and melt away,
 And to the winds the little birds intrust
 Their dainty bosoms,—as the long days' light,
 Piercing the forest's shades, and setting free
 Their ice-bound haunts, in wild-wood beasts awakes
 New hopes, new stings of amorous desire ;
 So may not thou, oh blessed time perchance,
 Return to souls with misery outworn,
 And sepulchred in sorrow, by mischance
 And the sad truths of life untimely marr'd ?
 Not for the wretched, surely, are the rays
 Of Phœbus shrouded, and in darkness quench'd
 For evermore ? Then, even so
 Do thou, balm-breathing Spring, infuse a glow
 Into this frozen heart, already old,
 Ere yet away the days of blooming youth have roll'd.

Art thou, boon Nature, art thou still alive ?
 Alive, and does the unaccustomed ear
 Still hear the sound of thy maternal voice ?
 Of white-limb'd Nymphs streams were erewhile the home,
 Springs crystal-clear their tranquil home, the glass
 That mirror'd their fair forms. Immortal feet
 In mystic dances shook the dark ravines
 And tangled forests, that are now the drear
 Abode of the wild winds. The shepherd then,
 As to the flowery banks of running streams
 He led his thirsty yeanlings, finding there
 A doubtful shelter from the noonday heat,

Heard the shrill piping of the rustic Pan
 Resound along the river banks, and saw
 Its waters quiver, and was struck with awe;
 For there, unseen, the Goddess of the Bow
 Into the tepid stream had sunk, to lave
 The dust and soil of the ensanguined chase
 From her fair arms and form of stately virgin grace.

There was a time when grass and flower and grove
 All thrill'd with life. The gentle winds of heaven,
 The clouds, and the Titanian lamp, were all
 In sympathy with man. It was the time
 When the wayfarer in the lonesome night,
 Watching with eyes intent thy radiant star,
 Oh Venus, as it beam'd on hill and dale,
 Deem'd that thou wert companioning his way,
 And hadst a thought for mortals. 'Twas the time,
 When whoso fled the social taint of towns,
 Their fatal rancours, and their deeds of shame,
 Sought refuge in the forests' deepest shades,
 And to his bosom clasp'd its rugged stems,
 Convinced that life glow'd in their bloodless veins,
 That the leaves breathed, and in their sad embrace
 Daphne and Phyllis' hearts were beating still,
 And still of Clymene's son the wail was heard,
 As when great Jove in ire
 Him from the chariot that illumines the world
 Down, headlong down, into Eridanus hurl'd.

Nor you, ye rifted crags,
 Did the laments of human pain and woe
 Pass unregarded by, while in your dark
 Recesses Echo found a coy retreat.
 No voice phantasmal of the winds was she,
 But the grief-stricken spirit of a Nymph,
 Of all her body's tender limbs despoiled
 By hapless love and ruthless destiny.
 'Mid grottoes dim, and precipices bare,
 And haunts of men grown desolate, did she
 Tell to the arching vault of heaven of griefs
 Not to herself unknown, and to our deep

Sob-broken lamentations gave a voice.
Fame, too, reputed thee
Versed in the story of our race,
Thou tuneful bird, that comest still to sing
To the hush'd woods, that Spring again is nigh,
And, when the meadows in repose are lapp'd,
Unto the silent shades of night bewail
The ancient wrongs and infamies accours'd,
That made the heavens themselves with wrath and pity pale.

But thou art of a race
Nowise to ours akin. Thy varied notes
Are not by sorrow modulated. Thou,
By guilt unsoil'd, of less account than we,
Find'st a safe harbourage in the dusky dells.
Alas! E'er since Olympus halls are void,
And the fierce thunderbolt, that blindly sweeps
Through murky clouds along the mountains, smites
The guilty and the innocent alike .
With icy dread, and since our native soil,
Estranged, and heedless of her children, rears
A race to wailing prone and weak lament,
Do thou, boon-hearted Nature, hide from us
Men's hapless cares, and destinies ignoble,
And to my soul restore the ancient fire,
If that indeed thou livest, and if aught
There be in heaven, or on the dædal earth,
Or in the circuit of the vasty main,
That pities not, but takes some note of human pain.

CHILDREN OF TEMPEST.¹

A TALE OF THE OUTER ISLES.

BY NEIL MUNRO.

CHAPTER XX.—HALF-BROTHERS.

THE lovers, who had been at Loch-an-Ealan, a favourite haunt of their privileged hours, where they could have wellnigh a world of their own, had come back to the presbytery, and were parting in the porch. Anna had been happy almost to an aching of the sense of it; at the very sight of Duncan every apprehension had departed. There was, in this last hour, something of Arcadian simplicity in their dalliance—the flying and stolen salute of the fields, the warmth and pressure of dusky barns and shy sheep-folds, little repulses, tempting mockeries and defiances, easy triumphs, for it was not often they found themselves alone, and Uist, as we know, is not a lover's land except in darkness or the hour of the sagging moon. If Duncan never heeded to grasp the material benefits of the world, leaving even his own due of these to his brother, he was greedy of the rarer blisses, the fragrant ones, that have no pang of disillusion following after them, that Heaven puts in the way of her poorest sons, and he was never so much the man complete and confident as when he had Anna in his arms.

She had a waist so pliant with young strong life, it gave him the old savage joys of the possessor and protector. When her laughing tame resistances broke down shamefully, he valued her lips the more for the contention, and to get them was to know he was a captive himself, for they drew out his very soul. Breath of the mountain thyme, cheek that lay to his, ravishing soft and silken, sweeping him into a delirium only to be dispelled by the laughter of her eyes! She was no languishing lover, —the breed of them is not in stormy isles,—she did not, like most women, show her nativity in her character, otherwise she had been more mist than sun, mysterious like the brooding lochs of Uist, solemn like the moors and the wave-thrashed macharland. It was said there was a touch of Spain, three hundred years old, in her family; perhaps it was that and the school in France that gave her less of the long thought that bodes in the Gaelic bosom. She was no languishing lover; that she was altogether his was a thing she would have him know without her showing it:

that and a spirit of playfulness made her loving the more sweet.

The hour had come when Duncan must go: she stood silent in his arms.

A sound of rude minstrelsy from the direction of the bay brought them back to the human world: Anna raised her head, leaned back to look out at the porch window, and saw the bacchanalians scattering about the bay and the township.

"What a pity!" she said, distressed. "These men are making fools of themselves, and Ludovick from home! How vexed he will be! I'm afraid the Benbecula smugglers are to blame for this: their boat is in the bay, and the fishermen have not been out at the banks to-day."

Mercifully they could not make out the words of the song the fishermen ranted, though the air was familiar to Duncan as a favourite of his brother's, and the women of the township were out in a panic lest Herself should hear, coaxing or commanding their men-folk home.

"I am so glad Col has no more to do with that pack," said Duncan.

"So am I—for the sake of his brother. But if it were not for you I do not know that I should very much care. I always thought the traffic half respectable because Col Corodale was in it: the trade just gave him that—that air of romance that sits well on a handsome man who cannot control very lofty thoughts."

"You sinner!" cried Duncan. "I think him all the better, if not even the more romantic, because he is honest and busier now about reputable affairs."

"Too busy to see much of Boisdale presbytery nowadays, at any rate," said Anna. "Ludovick has been missing him at Mass."

"Perhaps I'm not wholly blameless for his sinful state. Corodale can ill afford to have the two of us making weekly trips to Boisdale. I have a notion that there's but the one thing he envies me, and for that I cannot blame him; the wonder would be if it were otherwise."

"And what may that be?" asked Anna, smiling, and knowing very well, as her lover plainly saw.

His answer was to kiss her.

"On Sunday—I shall be over on Sunday," were his last words as he left for his long walk home. She did not come part of the way as she was used to do, for the noisiness of the fishermen made it unadvisable; but she stood at the door to look after him, feeling the day for the first time ohill and dreary. He turned round once; she would have preferred that he had not done it, for Uist always deems the backward glance bad-omened, and then she went indoors, a little pensive.

Duncan went on his way with the glow of the lover still in him, and hardly hearing the sounds of revelry that were constantly in front, though every group of singing men he came up to stopped

the chorus before he got close enough to hear the words. Some of them did so guiltily, shame-faced, but Duncan did not see that; others because their women rushed out as he approached and silenced them. It was so till he drew near the huts of Milton, and here, seated on the last of a stack of peats, was a group more melodious than any that had gone before. He took up the air, hummingly, himself, so pleasant was his humour, thinking of the Sunday.

"Seoladair, seoladair, what is your ru-
ing?"

A rotten ship and a foul land-fall.
That was to-day, to-night be drinking
From the small black pot, and forget
it all."

The men stopped as he came up to them.

"Faith! and it's yourselves are merry on it, lads," said he cheerfully.

"Middling, middling, Master Duncan," said an old fellow soberer than his neighbours. "Jib-boom was for once in his good vapours, and gave us the freedom of a keg yonder, and we're not accustomed." Some young men laughed. There was something odd, Duncan thought, in the way they looked at him, but it might be no more than Uist's interest in a sweetheart, till he had gone a dozen paces past them, when they broke into their song again—

"Duncan, Duncan, what is your wish-
ing?"

A crock of gold and an easy life.
Come over from Corodale, then, and
welcome,
To make the crock of gold your wife."

The rhyme burned into his consciousness as something never to be forgotten; he seemed to have known the words all his life, and yet they puzzled him for a moment. What gold did they speak of? Did they think life in Corodale so profitable or easy? Let them try it for a while and find how much easier was their own. Then the meaning built itself among his rambling thoughts—this had something to do with Anna and the Loch Arkaig legend he had never once had a thought of since he was a lad, when it was a tale that gave heroic interest to the person of old Dermosary. He had an impulse to run back at his insulters, but a thought of Anna and the scandal this might raise prevented him. By Askernish and Mingary, Ollay Loch and Ormaclett he went, and in the dark through Dorochay Glen, and the Pass of Hellisdale—three hours of amazement, of speculation, of anger, of self-examination, of distress. There was no rain when he reached Corodale; a quarter moon struggled among clouds; the sound of the sea beating on Rhu Hellisdale oppressed the night with a melancholy he shared, and sea-birds whistled dolorous above the waves that are their home. Corodale House looked black, abandoned, a fort empty, eyeless, full of old considerations, moaning in the wind like Kismul Castle, only a shred of light in the upper storey, where sat, he knew, his brother Col. Once it had been gay enough in Corodale House, when his

father was alive, his mother young and beautiful, and himself a child; when the pipes went and the trump as at a fair, and neighbourliness prevailed. By-and-by it would be so again, and Anna's bower would rise in the garden and her evening lamp gladden the darkness, all happy and all well; but he could not guess that, and God! to-night how dolour clutched the place! So sad, so strange, so unwelcoming, so cold!

Col, in the upper room, sat at a congenial occupation. He was no common miser to gloat on the metal stamp of his possessions. The sound of his gold, indeed, was apt to startle him, because it proved that it was something talkative and foolish, calling attention to itself. What he preferred was the discreet dumb record of it on the written page. Though there was more money in that upper room than Duncan could have credited, knowing the constant complaints of his brother, its owner never cared to look at it except to assure himself that it was safe: the very candle might have been a spy, to see him open the box and glance so quickly in and shut the lid so suddenly again. If his hair was getting thin on the top, it was not with holding up the lid of his chest to count his money, as Corodale cotters said. No; he much preferred his book—to see the column grow by guineas, ay! even if it were only by shillings. It was with joy he came to the foot of a page and summed it. He

would search his pockets on a Saturday for a coin, no matter how small, to make up the column; for his fancy was a column complete in the week, and great was his ingenuity to make it out in sums small or large. And then when the page was turned, O Lord! it was a sweet indulgence carefully to ornament the virgin page with the sum brought forward; to that went his finest penmanship, yet when the figures stood by themselves he was unhappy till some others went below them, and the week's accumulation had manifestly again begun. More than once had he stayed from Mass on a Sunday to put his contribution to the hoard, so that the week might open auspiciously. He had had always in his mind an ideal sum that, once attained, should mark the bounds of his ambition, and set him free to spend gloriously upon the schemes he had made out for his years of leisure. It had grown and grown—that ideal figure—as his secret store, as his actual possessions, had grown; the day of his liberty receded every week, till now it was farther off than ever.

But to-night Col was not even at his book; he was intent upon a chart of the Outer Isles. It had been his father's; he had remembered seeing it as a boy, and of late had searched about the house and found it. To-night he narrowly conned it, the isles of the Cat to the southmost—Barra, Uist, Benbecula, Eris-

kay, Hellisay, Lingay, Flodday, Pabbay—all the rocks that fret the Minch and feel the churn of the Atlantic. The map was freckled with red crosses, and every cross accompanied by a date in his father's hand of writing. Col knew now what that meant, though the puzzle as a boy was beyond him—each cross marked a search for the Arkaig treasure, and these were the dates of his father's expeditions. He could not but marvel at the patience and the industry manifest on this tattered sheet of paper; his father seemed to have drawn a comb through all the Outer Islands in his hope of raking a treasure to the top. Many had been his systems of search, based on the foolishest things—not on legend and rumour alone, but even on dreams and omens. And yet how hopeless a search too—among the broken fangs of the girning tides, among Atlantic spume, or in lonely plains of sand, or on the shores of lochs, and through these ancient temples, cairns, castles and barps, hags and mosses. Col, with his gift of imagination, felt in himself each time he pored on it his father's travails, chagrins, and despairs. For fifteen years his father quested; the last had been at Mingulay, twelve years ago by the date on the chart. It was the time something of fortune came to him from another quarter, and how poorly he proved himself capable of husbanding the same!

Col heard his brother come into the house, and rolled

up the chart hurriedly. "By heavens!" he thought, "but for him I might have had it now. I wonder how my bit song went."

He came down-stairs. Duncan sat at the table, white-faced, his brow disturbed, eating his food and finding no savour in it. Col gave but the one glance at him, and saw the hour had come for craft.

"Holloa, lad!" said he, cheerfully, coming into the room with a seaman's red shirt tucked in at the band of his breeches, and taking a seaman's pace back and forward on the floor, his hands in his pockets, his figure straight as a young saugh. "Holloa, lad! Home? You have had a sharp walk of it. And how's his lordship of the Isles and all the folks at Boisdale? I'm in the hope that they are well."

"Well, well, very well," said Duncan, in a voice empty of all interest, fiddling with his fork and spoon, looking at the wall before him and seeing nothing, but with the overcome of a song sung fifteen miles away dirling in his ears.

"Struck! struck badly, by God!" said Col to himself, and waited for what was coming. For a while there was a silence in the room—for one at least; to Duncan the air of the "Little Black Pot" was louder far than the boom of the wave on Rhu Hellisdale. He could not eat with that drunken chorus so oppressing him: back he pushed his plate, and plucked from his heart the mystery that troubled him. "Did you ever hear of the Looh Arkaig *ulaidh*?" said he.

Col laughed. "To the devil!" said he; "did I ever hear of my own great-grandfather?"

"But I mean of late."

"Late? No later, if you want to know, than yesterday, when — well, no matter, no matter: with a man of more importance I would have given him more than he got for it."

"Is—is it thought to be still to the fore?"

Col stopped his walk, looked pointedly at his brother, and laughed. "Come, come!" said he; "who knows that better than yourself? By all accounts there's nobody has a better right."

Duncan's face grew whiter than ever. "By the living God! Col," he said, with a fist on the table, "I never gave the treasure a thought for ten years, except perhaps to think it a curious fairy story."

Col laughed again, more slyly than ever. "Well, who's denying it, lad? I have thried all along the thing was never in your cognisance."

"*Mo chreach!* Was it necessary to assure any one of that in Corodale?"

"Well, not in Corodale—let them venture to say anything about it in Corodale and there's me to reckon with!—but elsewhere in the Islands here and there—here and there—oh! I would not make too much of it, but here and there things have been mentioned."

Duncan groaned. "And you never hinted it to me?"

"Not I," said Col, readily. "I'm the last to put a spoke in the wheel of any man."

"But such a blackguard

thing, Col—that they should think that of me!"

"Just so!" said Col, shrugging his shoulders. "That's it, but I would not mind the thinking so much if they kept their mouths shut."

"But Col, Col, surely *you* did not think it was some dubious coin in a crook that sent me over to Boisdale."

"Here's my bit song! bravo for my song!" thought Col. He put up his shoulders again. "Bah! Donacha, there's no need for play-acting between the pair of us. You'll admit I let you go your own gait, and never asked you anything about it. Damn it! man, I agree with you that youth and good looks and a handsome tocher are no drawbacks to a woman; they're all things that time will cure,—Corodale would be none the worse for any of them."

Duncan felt the infernal pang, he was struck to the core. He leaned with his arms on the table and his face in his hands. The house was dead; the room, indifferently lit by peat flame and a lamp, had Col's blood-red shirt for the brightest thing in it. Col could count, if he liked, the pulse of the waves on the shore of the promontory, but Duncan heard nothing but the echo of a song.

"Then this is it, Col," he said, looking up in a little. "I'm to take it that all Uist, including my own mother's son, believes I'm the rogue that this implies?"

"Oh, well——"

"Come, Col, come; no shuf-

fling, man; the hour's gone by for that between us." He stood to his feet and went up to his brother standing with his back to the fire, and presented a determined and compelling front, with his face like flint and his eyes flashing.

"Well, you know the world; it's cursed seldom it gives the lover of a moneyed lass the credit for having a single mind on her person only."

"By heavens! let me meet one other man to say to my face what you hint at, and I'll stretch him dead at my feet."

Col cracked his thumb. "*Dhe!* Bonny bloodshed for a half-priest, Duncan," said he. "If it's to stop the tongue of Uist on that business you're bent, you should go about with a gun and bring the clan with you and make a month's holiday of it. Faith! there's damned little sport in the island anyway."

"But Col, Col, man," he said bitterly, taking his brother by the shirt-sleeves, "did it not seem horrible to you that I should be so mercenary?"

"Well, I admit the business annoyed me," said Col. "There was no doubt a roguish element in it. For here were you—if I may take the liberty—a little—a little marred by your reputation as—as——"

"As a stuck priest; yes, yes, don't bock at it, man!—as a stuck priest, yes, Col, yes! Well?"

"And wasting your time too in a certain way of speaking, at Corodale, a poor place at the

best of it, without a penny behind your back——"

Duncan winced. "That is true, that is true," said he. "I never gave so important a consideration a single thought. I was bold enough, by Heaven!"

"Now here's the way I look at it; the girl of herself is worth the best in all Albyn."

"It is so."

"And with Dermosary's fortune——"

"Her only blemish, Col; as sure as death I think it so. And I never knew of it."

"You'll admit it looks bad for you, in all these circumstances, to be hanging at her heels."

"For me!" said Duncan, smiling bitterly. "Man! Col, that never occurred to me; what I am thinking of is how it looks for her. A stuck priest—as you say—a fellow that has neither present position nor prospect of it, so poorly thought of even by the folks that know him best that they must believe him capable of the most filthy meanness—I was contemplating a pretty partner for the woman who, as you say, deserves the best man in Albyn. Thank God, the blunder is not beyond remedy!"

Col found this mood beyond him: he had nothing to say, but wondered what his brother would propose.

"To-day I was so happy," said Duncan, as if he spoke to himself and no one else was in the room. "I would not have changed my place with any man in Europe. To-night I envy the poorest hind in the

Hebrides. Well, one thing's certain, Col; 'tis all bye with Boisdale."

Col's face lit, but his brother had no eyes to see that. "I would not mind their gossip a docken leaf," said he. "You may be poor, but you have come of the very best: many a man has cobbled his brogues with a bride's fortune before to-day, and——"

"Stop, stop, Col!" cried Duncan; "you mean well, but you hurt me. I am going out a turn to do some thinking."

He pushed past his brother and went out of the house. Col stood a while in the room, guessing at the outcome of a crisis he had so cunningly brought about. He waited a while. He heard his brother's footsteps pass the house front. "Well, let him take it!" he said, with a shrug of his shoulders as if he threw off all responsibility, but honestly wished his ends had been attainable by other measures, for they had in other days been happy enough together. By-and-by he went upstairs and into his room and prepared for bed. When he blew out the light he looked a moment from the window, and could see, by the light of the moon, his brother walking up and down between the barn and the

boundary-wall. He cursed anew the need for what he did. "We'll see in the morning," he thought, and went to bed, but could not sleep. The sea was sounding over all, but he fancied he could hear, in spite of it, the footsteps of Duncan crunching on the sand. Old days came into his recollection—days when they were boys—when they guddled for trout in Usinish burn, and drank whey from the one bowl in the summer shealings and slept in the same bed every night. "Ach! the best thing that could have happened him," he told himself with a shake, "a touch up to his manhood!" But could not sleep. What would his brother say in the morning? He did not need to wait so long to learn. By-and-by the outer door opened and shut softly; Duncan's footsteps were on the stair, the bedroom door was opened. "Are you asleep, Col?" Duncan whispered.

"Not yet," said Col, and wished to Heaven he was.

"I'm for off the Islands," said Duncan; "there's but the one thing for it."

"Indeed," said Col. "You might do worse, but we'll talk it over in the morning," and turned on his pillow. Duncan went down the stair again.

CHAPTER XXI.—DUNCAN'S DEPARTURE.

He sat below for hours, sometimes falling into a doze close-packed with horrors, that he waked from aching like one that had been stunned. The night was cold; he broke the

carefully builded peats that were meant to keep the fire alive till the morning, and by-and-by it went out altogether: what did it matter to him that was all fires within? It was

not that on leaving the island he had any hesitations,—pride and the unreasoning impulse that sweep away his kind on the most frantic enterprises had soon determined that for once and all: but what he spent the cold hours pondering was, whether or not he should see Anna again before leaving. If he did what every pulse in his body craved for, he would go to her to-day. But then there would be the need for an explanation, and the most delicate he could offer would be a coward's blow. Besides, he could not tell how far his resolution would stand the test of a meeting; he might be tempted too much. There was but one way of honour, though its seeming cruelty made him shiver to think of it. He must be on the sea before she had his farewell. But that determined on, he had still to frame a message. With paper and ink he made a score of attempts to put the situation in words that would torture her least, and would leave her free, and still would make it plain he was the same to her, and was not hopeless of a happier time.

"... I have found myself, and lost all else that was worth having, since I left you," he wrote at last. "It would have been better for both of us if it had happened sooner. I have discovered that I have till now had but small consideration for your interests, and let my vanity and my selfishness put common justice to you out of my mind. What I have thought of you, *Anna bhig*,—what I think at this dark hour, more deeply than ever before,—what I will

always think of you so long as I live, is not to be expressed on a sheet of paper. But it is a poor bargain that is all one-sided, and I have just been thinking that while I was ready to take the best gift in the world, I came for it without deserving it, and with nothing of my own. I have been happy, *Anna bhig*, and so rich in thought of you, I clean forgot that I was only the prodigal come home, and without a penny and without a calling. I think too much of you to tie you at your age to so poor a prospect as mine is like to be unless I take some step to mend it. I am leaving Uist, and I must not see you before I go—that's the one thing dauntens me. Where I go and what I am to do must lie with chance: I take but two things with me—love and hope. But I am asking, *Anna bhig*, no promises; for that my future is too dark. If fortune favours me you will hear speedily; if not, then I would, if I could, be asking you to forget. . . ."

When the letter was finished for the last time, he was astonished at the scrupulous and studied penmanship, ashamed of the shabby words, so worn-out in the use of common everyday affairs. There was not a throb of his heart in them; not a single drop of the tears that were in him deep as wells. So much for scholarship!—it could not make him in a hundred years express what he could make plain with one glance of the eye to her that owned him. It was not this way went abroad the fellows who ride in *ceilidh* tales from maidens desolate, and in the shealing songs; no spirit

of sour ink with them, nor chewing the head of the grey goose quill.

He wrote a line to Father Ludovick too. "You have been good; you have been kind. And I have been a fool, and showed poor gratitude. Think what you will of me but that I can ever forget."

Sour ink! sour ink! black marks on some accout paper: not a drop of blood in them—well, it could not be helped! they must stand for the best he could venture. When it was done it was the dawning, and swallows fed their young in the barn eaves. Wild weather promised; the sun came up from black sea-bounds and seabirds lined the beach, and Rhu Hellisdale was white with them bickering on the shelves. He put out the light, and gave the room to the pallor of the day. In came a servant yawning, startled to find him there before her, and busied herself to set the fire.

"My grief!" she cried, with hands uplifted to find the embers of her gathering peat grey and cold. "Och! och! Master Donacha, here's misfortune; you must have spoiled the *griosach* of the fire. Something will come of it worse than sneezing," then set to the task of rekindling it, humming softly to herself the lines of the grace for fire—

"Within my heart oh kindle Thou
The love of love for every neighbour;
For foe, for friend, for kith and kin;
The brave, the knave, the thrall of labour."

"Have you not been in your

bed this night, Master Donacha?" she asked in a while, stopping her puffing at the fire. "Och! now is not that a poor business? If it was Col, little would be the wonder that would be on me, for night or day was ever the same with yon one, and the father that went before him."

"I have been writing, Morag," answered Duncan, with a weary smile. "I am making ready to take a turn to the Lowlands."

"And if I might take the liberty—when may you be back, Master Donacha?"

"That will depend on many things, like the start of the lazy man's sheep-shearing."

"Ochanoch! is that the way of it now, Master Duncan? It's ill to keep the black-cock always in the heather, and I knew it would come to the wings for it sooner or later. Faith! I daresay I'll not be staying long myself in Corodale. I was thinking to myself it was better I was where I came from, in Benbecula. *Tìgh gun chu, gun chat, gun leanabh beag, tìgh gun ghean gun ghaire.*" (A house without dog, without cat, without child, a house without liveliness or laughter.)

Col came down that morning from a night of the pleasantest dreams, with no more doubt of what his brother would do than that he himself would make a hearty breakfast, for all his craft had been built upon what he knew so well of Duncan's character. But while he was assured that his brother would go, and felt content in the prospect, he was not going to

show too hearty an agreement with the step.

"What's this about going, lad?" he asked. "Did you come upstairs last night to tell me that, or by any chance was I dreaming?"

"I wish you were, Col, and I too," said Duncan. "I have had pleasanter nightmares than this that troubles me. I'm going with the first vessel for the mainland I can get a chance of. I have been wasting far too much time in Corodale: there's neither two men's work nor two men's reward in the place, and anyone less considerate than yourself would have told me that sooner."

Col, just for a second, thought the words were mockery, but no! he saw a frank and affectionate face before him; his brother was still insensible of his own rights, and had no suspicion how much they were encroached on.

"It's the God's truth, Duncan!" said he; "there's scanty kail for two of us in Corodale. Kelp at less than forty, and half the scamps on our shore cheating us out of even our honest share of that; black cattle and ponies at that ebb where I could be giving them as Fair-day gifts to my friends; the white-fishing the one week as boss as a barrel, and the next with good hauls made into manure for the want of salt. You'll admit I never troubled you much with accounts, Duncan, for I was sweart to vex you; but you have had your eyes, and see the struggle that there is to keep things going."

Duncan could have told as

much by the experience of his palate and the emptiness of his own pocket, for every day saw his brother's management more frugal. Of late the latter had had a new dream of a mainland house—perhaps in Edinburgh, where lairds of smaller lands than Corodale nowadays kept their winter quarters in something of state even with kelp at forty.

"I know," said Duncan. "And there's one thing troubling me."

Col winced, for he knew very well what that was. His brother could not be thrust off the edge of Uist without some money, and curse the need for it that started at the top of a new page!

"But what for should it be you to go?" said he, putting off a while the unpleasant moment. "You're the elder-born, and I'm in the second stall. Corodale's yours. If it's furth fortune, as they say, I'm the one to be packing the haversack and you to look after your own here, though I could not be wishing you joy of it. East, west, north, or south, I hope I'm man enough to face what any airt of the world offers me. By the Book! I could gaily start tomorrow."

Duncan felt thankful for so generous a heart; this was the Col of his imagining!

"No, *ille*! indeed I start tomorrow, or as soon as may be, and you know the reason. I could not set a foot on the wester side of the river Roag after this without being affronted. Man! they're mak-

ing songs on me,—but I'll vex you none with that. Corodale's yours by every wish of our mother and our father. I wish you may make a fatter living out of it in the future than you made in the past."

When it came to a consideration of what money was needed, even then the younger brother must be true to his nature. He hummed and he hawed. The times were so terribly bad, he had not the wherewithal exactly at his hand. But he would get an accommodation. The Sergeant over at Creggans was due him money still for his share of the sloop, he said, and he would ride up to-morrow and get enough from him to set Duncan forth with something in his pocket.

"I wish it could be to-night," said Duncan, "for the sooner I'm off the better, and a chance might offer at any moment."

Col was glad of the excuse for hurrying, and he went that afternoon to Benbecula, catching the second tide upon the lesser ford.

"Well," said the Sergeant, as they sat over a horn, "you're there, and you're not ill-pleased by the look of you. I can guess, whatever you meant by your song, it served its purpose."

"It did that," said Col. "He's going off to the Lowlands—yon one—for good."

"Now, by the Seven Stars!" said the innkeeper with a scoundrel admiration, "it is you have the ingenuity! I was fair beat to understand the demand for song. Struck! He must be a greater fool than

I gave him the credit for, and that's saying a good deal, by your leave, or without it as it may suit. But you did not come over to lament with me about such dire intelligence."

"Not a bit of me," said Col. "I came for a small accommodation. He wants twenty pounds from me."

"Just so," said the innkeeper, very dry; "just so. And I make no doubt he'll have it: your heart was aye a credit to you, and the season has been good."

"Not so very good; and there's no cream on a cat's milk. I declare I cannot tell where to lay my hands on so much unless I get it from yourself."

"Twenty pounds, h'm! That's back where we were before, and I would have thought you might have tried the little poke in Corodale before coming again to Creggans," said the Sergeant, who had always his own reason for lending on such prospects as Duncan's departure left. "But you'll have it, *loachain*; the sloop did fairly well on her last trip. Twenty pounds!—a cheap riddance, eh, Col? And out of a bit song!—

"Duncan, Duncan, what is your wishing?
A crock of gold and an easy life."

He sang the verse jocularly. "That was well contrived," said he. "Jib-boom will be giving me the credit of it; but I could neither have had the notion nor made the song if my life depended on't."

"He would never have gone

otherwise," said Col. "I——" and stopped suddenly, for he saw the Sergeant's wife at the stair-foot, listening, it was like enough; and she could understand them.

"There is no harm done," said the Sergeant, turning to the English, when he had given her a scowl that sent her flying; "she has not the brains of a hen. When does he start, yon one?"

"With the first vessel he gets a chance of."

"Well, there's the sloop herself; she is leaving Uskavagh with a cargo of fish and a trifle of Barra for Clyde to-morrow; what would hinder him to take a passage with her?"

So Col rode back to Corodale through a stormy evening with his twenty pounds and his brother's departure all arranged for. He gave him the money with a grudge, but still got

some satisfaction out of it, for he kept a quarter of the Sergeant's loan.

The sloop came off Corodale next day in the evening and Duncan went aboard. He had given his letters to his brother to send across to Boisdale. If Col had been of late on closer terms with Father Ludovick, and of a nature different from what he was, he might have looked for him to be the messenger himself and make the blow less cruel. But Col, he knew, was not the man for any office of the kind where delicacy was demanded; the letters must speak for themselves. Till the very last he was eager for departure, yet when the sloop was under sail and he saw the islands sink behind him, Hecla and Benmore in clouds, and the coast noisy with the breakers of a north-east wind, he felt the greatest sorrow of his life.

CHAPTER XXII.—A STRICKEN HEART.

Col himself set out for Boisdale in the morning, riding a short-legged Barra pony clean-clipped and shod, with a great deal of hurry in the blood of it, the rider amazing long and large on the back of a beast so small, and busy with his heels, being cheery over one thing done and eager to be over with another. The Minch was grey as a gull's back, contemplating offence; skiffs with well-reefed mains scudded for sheltering creeks or harbours, knowing what was coming soon or late, but the day was dry, and the wind, blowing behind Col, set

him out of Corodale and past the foot of Hecla with the spirit of a bird. He could have sang—so jubilant he felt—if the only tune that could find room in his memory at the moment had not been "The Little Black Pot," and some dregs of decent sentiment kept him from giving that one utterance, though the words he had made himself to the tune of it went humming in his head. People in his fields looked up and wondered to see him pass so brisk on it, so hearty in his greetings, that was of late morose as Macailin's

boar. Yesterday he had been quarrelling with his tenants over the rents of kelp, and threatening all the paper laws they had no understanding but a great deal of dread for; now he passed them with a smile on his good-looking face. He kept his mind, as well as he could, from brooding on his task. Up rose the rain-goose—the black-necked diver—from his nest beside the tarn, crying “*Deoch! deoch! deoch!*” rose, too, the mallard—Mary’s Duck—in swelling circles the higher he got, then darted like an arrow to the Sound. The island was alive with brave and zestful things, and interesting for a man on a horse with leisure to look on them, and Col, who ever liked the creatures of the wild that live on no man’s crop or manger but on the broadcast bounty of God, found his travelling to his mind so long as he kept his thoughts from its object. In the bounds of Corodale his own folk knew him, gave small return for the smile and brief courtesy to his salutation, for they felt that now were come the days of bitterness since Duncan was gone. But out of his own lands, on the western side of the island, where the ways were thronged with people, he rode like a noble gentleman, high-renowned for courage. So friendly, so affable his mood, he took a child once to ride *biolag* on the saddle before him, and the passers-by were charmed to see such kindness in one true-born, the real *duine-uasail*, saying, “Och! there’s the good heart now for

you! May he never have care on the saddle behind him!”

But when he came to the top of the brae that gave him a sight of the white house of Boisdale, the church on the rock, and the townlands scattered far and near of Father Ludovick’s parish, the coward rose in him. He drew up his horse in a fright at his first idea. He could not be the one to break the news. Let them have the letters to-day, and he would come again himself to-morrow when the lamenting was over. So he found a messenger in one of the wayside houses and set him on with Duncan’s letters to the presbytery, then turned and rode home again. He came back next day to Boisdale at dinner-time; the paltriest considerations were beginning to count a good deal in his economies.

“I am glad to see you, Col,” was Ludovick’s welcome; “you are just in time to join us,” and Anna felt her heart expand, for now there would be explanations, and all would again be well. Col, who had not held that hand in his nor looked in her eyes since Duncan took possession, felt his treachery would be justified even if the girl had not a farthing. He was as nearly in love with her as any man might be that had his heart in a ledger.

“Not a word about the letters till we have eaten a morsel,” said the priest, less elated by the visit than his sister, for he had read the letters over and over with a deepening sense of the severance they created, and small hope that

Col brought consolation. "Not a word till we have eaten; there was never a complication that was not the easier understood after vivands." Anna, he saw, would have had it otherwise, but for once he must have his own way, so down they sat, no very cheerful party, to a meal that only Col could relish. He helped himself with a liberal hand to Ludovick's Spanish wine, and felt his task was to be less disagreeable than he had feared, for here was the girl, showing some signs of a natural distress, it is true, but joining bravely in the snatches of conversation that her brother started on subjects far from their settled thoughts, and so trivial that their interest was exhausted in a sentence or two. What the priest designed was plain when the meal was over: he looked at his watch, and said he must go at once to the blessing of a new skiff to be launched at high tide.

"I'll be back in half an hour," he said, and gave Col a glance that commanded the gentlest consideration for the girl.

This was better still, thought Col, who found it ill to get over a fear that the priest at any moment might come down from the clouds where his thoughts dwelt generally, and might shrewdly understand him and discover. It could not have been planned better than that Anna and he alone should discuss the situation. When her brother was gone she turned on Col a face that, in spite of her brave restraint, was showing her hope and fear.

"Well," she said. "It was

kind of you to come; it was what I would have expected from you. We heard you rode across with the letters yourself yesterday and sent them on by another hand: I think I understand—and I am grateful. It has given us time to think. It was kindly considered; but for some time after I got the letter I was in a mood to saddle Gaisgeach and hurry after you."

"On my word, Miss Anna," said Col, calling all his craft together, "I came with the intention of giving you the letters with my own hand; but—but I was aye the coward when the duty was unpleasant, and I balked at the first sight of Boisdale presbytery."

"I understand. Perfectly. If Duncan—if your brother—had been half so considerate, he might have vexed his friends in Boisdale presbytery less. To go like this! without a word of warning, without good-bye; it is not our custom, Mr Col, is it?"

"What! without good-bye!" cried Col. "Come, now! that is news I find ill to believe of Duncan."

"It must have been a sudden decision?"

"Sudden enough, I'll allow," said Col; "but that would surprise nobody that knew Duncan, in many things as variable as the sand."

"Indeed, I was not aware of that peculiarity in his character," said Anna coldly, feeling that consolation came more slowly than she expected.

"I'm the last, perhaps, that

should mention it, and to tell the truth, most of his vagaries had the very best motives at the back of them. He came home on Tuesday night with his mind made up on leaving the Islands——”

“And he’s gone?” said Anna with a sunken heart.

“On the other side of the Minch by now.”

Then was he gone indeed! she knew from her own experience how widely the Minch could sunder. “Friends less intimate than myself—than Ludovick and myself—might naturally expect he would have mentioned his intention when he was here on Tuesday.”

“What!” cried Col again; “and he did not say anything of it? I thought at first you did not mean exactly that. Too bad! too bad! I declare I’m fair affronted; I thought he came over here for no other purpose, and that his letter was a form.”

Anna’s face, if she did not turn away to hide it, would have made it plain that this was anguish. “Then—then you were not taken by surprise?” she asked.

“Not a bit of it, Miss Anna; I was long expecting it. Who could wonder at it either? Corodale’s no very hearty place after some years of Paris. Do not be telling me he never let a word drop of his intention.”

Anna could not answer. She had been sitting before him searching his face for hope or consolation; but as the prospect of either melted with every word he gave her, she rose at last and walked to the window,

for fear she should demean herself. Could it be possible? Was any man—and Duncan before all—capable of so cruel a deceit as was in every word and look and act of his when she saw him last in this very room? Could he laugh as he had laughed, and coax, and banter, and kiss as he had done if he knew that in a day or two he was to wound her worse than with the dagger? Heedless of her visitor, she drew the letter from her bosom and searched it again for a key to the mystery, though every word of it was visible to her inward eye, a separate sting in her memory. She was young (she had reflected), she had not the acquaintance of any women like herself; she did not know for certain what her due was from him that held her heart in the hollow of his hand; but surely, surely the trivial fact that they had made no promises did not make their claims on each other the less! Promise—he said he “asked no promise”—was the man mad? She had almost found excuses before; now in the knowledge of what his brother told her, the letter was an insult: a wild proud anger whelmed her; she walked to the hearth tearing the paper in pieces and thrust them in the fire.

Col slyly watched, guessing her thoughts, indulging an admiration. She had never seemed more desirable for her own sake: a girl so fine would be thrown away on his brother, even if she had not a farthing. The burning of the letter greatly pleased him,—he could have

cheered when he saw it flare, no more warmly than her face that now she turned on him in a very different spirit from that she had before.

"Your brother has been rude," she said. "The poorest cotter in Uist would not have treated us so, and I think we deserved some more consideration, Ludovick and I. He was here on Tuesday, he said not a word that gave a hint of his intention; indeed his last words were a promise to be here on Sunday, and that he should steal away like this is disgraceful. His letter makes his rudeness all the worse: I would sooner he had sent his good-byes with yourself or some casual messenger or omitted them altogether."

"You will not do poor Duncan an injustice," said Col, in a great display of mortification. "I felt sure he told you he was going; but as he did not, it may well enough be that he made up his mind only after he met you."

Anna laughed with no gaiety. "That would be a poor compliment to my attractions, Mr Col," said she.

"I mean he may have decided between here and Corodale."

"Surely a step more momentous was never determined on upon so short a journey. That was the variable sands indeed, as you say. You are anxious to excuse your brother, and I cannot but think all the better of you for it, but—Where is he gone to? I hope I am not prying too closely into his private affairs; if so, you must excuse me."

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"Not at all, Miss Anna, not at all," said Col, who could not have had her in a mood to please him better. "Who has a better right to ask?"

"I make no claim to the honour," Anna hastened to explain. "I have no right at all so far as your brother is concerned."

"Faith, luck is with me there again," thought Col, who did not think she could have been free for such a declaration. "Beyond that he makes for the low country," he said, "and will write first from Edinburgh, I know no more than yourself, Miss Anna. What he will be after depends on chance, and we'll learn in good time, I daresay."

"Oh, there's no hurry, I assure you," said Anna. "Just a woman's curiosity on my part, you know. And Ludovick might be asking. Perhaps your brother will write us by-and-by if he can find the time. I am sorry to seem so curious, but an old friend of your brother's may perhaps presume to take the liberty: the reasons for so sudden a departure must have been grave?"

"What brought him to the bit he never told me, but Corodale is not Paris as I have said, Miss Anna; and it has long been in Duncan's mind since he came back from the college that Corodale was scarcely the place to keep two idle gentlemen."

"Idle gentlemen? So far as I have heard, neither of you was idle: your brother gave yourself the credit of working early and late. I hope we did

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not trespass too much on his time in Boisdale."

"Well, I have always done my best, and he was active enough, himself, there's no denying it."

"And you are said to have done very well with the Corodale skiffs this season," said Anna, who had the ears of a housewife.

"Middling, middling," said Col hurriedly. "I'm far from complaining. It's not an earldom, Corodale, and it's not plain *fuarag* for breakfast!"

"So far from that, it's very good indeed by all accounts," said the housekeeper.

Col eyed her quickly. "Did Duncan say that?" he asked.

"Your brother never brought his business affairs to Boisdale, Mr Col," said Anna, reddening a little; "and I'm not very sure that he knew himself."

Col laughed. "Well, the place can still keep a man and his wife at all events," said he, with a purpose in telling the truth for once.

"And if one of you had to go, the younger son——" She stopped suddenly, fearing she went too far.

Col was quite ready for that suggestion: had he not prepared for it? "That, Miss Anna, is the very thing I told him. It is true my father's and mother's notion was for Duncan to follow the priesthood and for me to look after the property that would have been out of our hands long ago if my father had not had his stroke of luck in his later years: but I have always treated Duncan since he came back as the head of

Corodale, and offered to go away myself. Home or abroad, it is all one to Col, I assure you. Thank God, I can sail a ship or hold a plough if need be. But my brother had his mind set, and so I'm here to smooth his awkward leave-takings, it seems, and with no great capability, I'm thinking."

"You do very well," said Anna, sick of a conversation that fell on her ear like blows. She drummed on the arm of her chair with her fingers; her lips were parched, an outraged pride possessed her, so that for the time her love and grief were gone. She sometimes smiled when she spoke; she sometimes even laughed; a high colour had come frequently to her face, and Col was quite deceived. After all, he thought, madame was no way badly hit but in her self-esteem, and that was its own cure: there was nothing settled between Duncan and her. This return to a siege he had abandoned for Duncan was opening full of promise. She was a rich woman, she was a fine woman, he had never seen her looking better than now, with her girlishness taken flight miraculously. But for the misfortune that had found him from home when Dark John came with a bidding to Dermosary's funeral, things might have been on the best of footings ever since, and no need for plots. In three months Anna would be more beautiful by twenty thousand pounds: he must ply a fast suit now that there was the opportunity.

Ludovick came back to find his visitor laying bare a score

of enterprises by which Corodale was to be as wealthy as in the days of his grandfather, when kelp was at two hundred shillings, and Anna courageously listening, and joining, to all appearance, in his interest, but with a face her brother saw revealed there was no consolation. What an idiot was this, to be so talkative about his miserable ambitions that he could not see the tragedy before him!

"O Ludovick!" cried Anna, when he entered, turning on him eyes that prayed for release; "Mr Col has been telling me that we have done his brother injustice. It seems he has always been keeping his ambitions in check, and that the poor Isles are at last insufferable."

"Is that it?" said the priest blankly, bewildered at an aspect of Duncan's character he had never seen a sign of, downcast for his sister's sake that so gallantly hid her torture. A trying stillness fell upon the three of them, till Col's good sense came tardily to him, and he rose to go.

"I hope," said he airily, "it will make no difference in your friendship to myself. At the worst the thing was a stupidity

I did my best to put a check on."

"Of course not, Col—of course not," said the priest; "come over as often as you can to see us. We have few callers at Boisdale. Your brother was always welcome. Ambition!" he laughed sadly. "Well, that's beyond me; a world I cannot set a foot in, but no matter. To jostle in the market for the upper hand, isn't it? to plan for the best of every packman's bargain, to sweat for place and fortune—alas! poor Duncan gone so far adrift from Corodale and contentment."

"Not contentment, Ludovick," said Anna. "I am afraid you and I have been very dull. Not contentment, his brother assures me."

Afraid for his sister, the priest almost hurried his guest away. They had not rightly left the door when Anna fled to her room. She stood for a little there calling back her indignation, that somehow now scurvily deserted her; but the storm in her bosom found escape in tears, even as she struggled for control. Then she came down and rued most bitterly the burning of her letter, that was now grey ash on the hearth-stone.

(To be continued.)

EGYPT.

CANNING called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old: the New Britains have brought themselves, if not into existence, at least into recognition, with the result of profoundly influencing public opinion in the Old Britain. Politicians who fail to grasp this fact will find themselves relegated to the parish council, or at best to the county or town municipality, and in future no policy affecting the Empire will be embarked upon with success by any statesman who does not carry the sympathies of a fair proportion of our countrymen beyond the seas. A French politician the other day muttered something in his beard about the evacuation of Egypt. He ought to be told, and his countrymen ought to learn,—if Fashoda has not taught them, as we believe it has,—that even if Mr Morley and Sir Henry Campbell - Bannerman were to contemplate so retrograde a policy, the whole Empire would rise against them. Evacuation is impossible, and even Mr Morley must now recognise this fact. Mr Gladstone left many bad legacies. In Egypt he prevented a logical arrangement; and until we frankly assume the protectorate of that country, our position there will be anomalous, though in no way insecure.

The work which Britain has done in Egypt in the last twenty years has been fully recognised even by our rivals. In every department of government, save in the administration of law and, to a greater extent, in the custody of the antiquities, English ideas and methods are supreme. The engineering works at Assiout and Assouan have received so much notice from the daily and weekly newspapers, that most educated people have now some idea of the vastness of the accomplishment and the immense value of its certain results. It is a commonplace of journalism to assert that the irrigation work done under Lord Cromer's rule is justification enough for the British occupation. True though this is, happily the work of the English tutors of Egypt is not confined to the improvement of its agriculture and the increase of its habitable area. Calculations have been made which tell us that the irrigation works will enable the country to support a vastly increased population, while the revenue will grow not merely by leaps and bounds, but by a progression practically geometric.¹ Scientific men ask you, however, to look at the other side of the shield, and point out that the White Nile is steadily decreasing in volume; they remind

¹ *E.g.*, since the above was written it is announced that this year's surplus on the Egyptian Budget is £2,000,000. Last year it was £200,000.

you that the great lakes in which it takes its rise are getting smaller year by year—the evaporation is not made good by the rainfall, and the drying up of the lakes is only a question of centuries. The Blue Nile, on the other hand, has an inexhaustible source, and if the future water-supply of Egypt is to be made sure, Abyssinia must provide a reservoir. Britain is on friendly terms with the Ethiopian monarch and has no designs upon his territory (the same cannot be said of France, who has the will, though happily not the power, to draw even “a spider’s web”¹ across the Blue Nile); and the reservoir, either within or perhaps only close by the Abyssinian frontier, will be in working order long before the southern branch of the great river has ceased to supply its annual life-giving flood.

There are claims upon England in Egypt other than those connected with the immediate and future prosperity of the fellaheen. There are townsmen as well as peasants in Egypt, and though agriculture should be the first care of the ruler,—it is long since it was so in Britain,—the industries of luxury require freedom from the restrictions of adverse tariffs and oppressive taxation. Egypt cannot at present hope to be a manufacturing country: when the waters of the Nile are more fully regulated, and the application of water-power to the generation of electricity

is more fully understood, the possibilities of Egypt even in this direction seem illimitable. At present, while steam remains the master worker, Egypt must continue to import not merely manufactures but fuel. Consequently its prospects, even in the matter of the production of sugar and cotton, are uncertain. Government factories and the seats of the industry of French companies dot the banks of the Nile at intervals too frequent for the complacency of the tourist, whose sense of the fitness of things is outraged by the sight of a tall chimney belching forth black smoke at eventide into an atmosphere so pure, so brilliant, so marvellous, that it seems fit only for the gateway of Eden. Trails of cloud, speaking of stewy workshops and crowds of labourers, the odour of burnt sugar on the water and in the air; the knowledge that around are the memorials of men who were great kings with an elaborate civilisation and a high convention in art when Abraham was but an industrious shepherd, provide discords irritating even to an American captain of industry.

These may be real grievances to the tourist, but Egypt is not yet a place for tourists only. It is the home of a nation, or at least of a large and industrious population—to whom the tourist provides in places a harvest, in others a raree-show—never in any case lasting for more than a third of the year.

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No one can know the real Egypt of the Egyptians who spends only the four-months European season in the land. November, December, and March are the normal harvest-times of the cultivator of the soil. In summer he enjoys himself: marriages, village festivals, and junketings of all sorts go on in the time when Europeans, who are not detained by duty, fly to cooler climes. Lord Milner, in his 'England in Egypt' (a work that might well be a text-book in every secondary school), tells of the coming of the flood-time in summer in words which have a literary charm born of absolutely truthful observation; but it is foreign to his purpose to tell of the life of the villages when the fields are under water. Work is impossible, and joy and pleasure reign—save when there is danger to the canal-banks, and the *corvée* is called upon to guard and repair them. Then there is anxious work for the officials of the irrigation department, for the Mudirs, and for the villagers. But, on the whole, the fellah sailing from homestead to homestead over his submerged fields has a happy summer-time. Then, too, the poacher is at large, and makes his harvest. The temples and burying-grounds are, in Upper Egypt at any rate, secure from inundation, and when the Europeans have left the country, the native servants of the Department of Antiquities offer few obstacles to organised bands of unauthorised explorers, who unfortunately destroy more

than they secure. The loss to history wrought by these riflers of ancient burying-grounds, during the last fifty years even, is incalculable. They are not yet checked, and are not likely to be until more practical men have to do with the oversight of this department. The director, M. Maspéro, and most of his assistants, are not men of affairs, and until their scientific attainments are supplemented by an infusion of practical common-sense, the losses, thefts, and destruction of the records of civilisation will continue, to the despair of Egyptologists and the impoverishment of posterity.

'Tis some years since Lord Milner's masterly book was written, and even in Egypt the spirit of the restless Briton has wrought its accustomed work. The land which moved by centuries now flies by years. Lord Cromer's annual reports, admirable as they are, like all that great man touches, get out of date within a few months. His energy is unceasing, his ambitions for the land he rules are unbounded, his knowledge is great, his sagacity unsurpassed—yet even he can hardly keep his records up to the date of his achievements. Never in the history of this Empire, may it be said, did occasion and instrument more fitly meet than when Evelyn Baring was given a practically free hand in the government of Egypt. What he might further have done had there been no international complications—had the *Caisse de la Dette*, the capitulations, and the like, never existed—

staggers the imagination. What he has done, in spite of these fetters, makes every Briton proud and Egypt his debtor for a greater sum of gratitude than it ever owed to the kings of any of its thirty dynasties.

Secure in the confidence of his King and of the Imperial Government, Lord Cromer lacks one thing to strengthen his hands—the intelligent appreciation of the mass of his countrymen. This is not the place to educate the British electorate as to the work their country is doing in Egypt; but it may not be inappropriate to suggest that members of Parliament—whose chief function in the eye of a philosopher is to educate their constituents—should take fitting occasion, apart from party questions, to give information—for which, it is true, themselves must first seek—as to this glory of our time and State.

The men of action have done and are doing their part. Are the fields of research sufficiently cultivated by men of the dominant race? The debts which students of the history of the human race owe to the German Lepsius and the Frenchman Mariette are universally acknowledged. Those great tomes of Lepsius, published some sixty years ago, record inscriptions and picture monuments which the carelessness of posterity has allowed to vanish. The work which Professor Sayce has inspired is of supreme importance. Egypt is for him a

pleasant pasture whence he can descend from the less known heights of Assyriology. Professor Petrie is working continuously, finding treasure at Abydos, where M. Amélincan has previously excavated, destroyed, and misinterpreted. He has edited and for the most part written a series of volumes dealing with the history of Egypt¹—a series not yet completed—in which a vast amount of information is closely packed. Professor Petrie's style is not alluring: he cares for nothing so much as facts, next he loves his own theories, and then he enjoys himself in demolishing those of others. He throws his facts at you, he promulgates his theories as if they were decrees of a Church council, and in the treatment of his adversaries he knows nothing of the use of the rapier. He writes out of an overflowing mind; his facts tumble on to the page from his note-book, and are presented as he found them, without any attempt to clothe them in any literary garb. There has been haste in the actual writing, none in the accumulation of the knowledge which has made the work possible. That an explorer of such diligence, a man of so wide knowledge, and a historian gifted with so much sympathy, should care so little for the manner of the presentment of his facts is a misfortune. It would almost seem at times that he despised his readers. 'Tis as if he would

¹ A History of Egypt from the Earliest Times. By W. M. Flinders Petrie, D.C.L., &c. London: Methuen.

rather go to a dinner-party in his working clothes than trouble to put on a clean shirt. He gives his facts, and leaves it to you to put them in a better order if you can. His books are the material of history: they will not be popular, but they cannot be neglected. Occasionally, no doubt, his theories must be received with caution,—indeed, now that we know so many facts about the early history of Egypt, all theories may be shied at,—unless they are supported by facts sufficiently plain to convince a county court judge or a sheriff-substitute—his equivalent in the land of ‘Maga.’

Professor Petrie’s series of historical books have, however, a literary value from the aid which he has received from Professor Stanley Lane-Poole. His treatment of the Arabic period is lucid, informative, and, so far as any one not an expert in his own period dare say, accurate.

Though the popular history of Ancient Egypt has still to be written, Mr E. Wallis Budge of the British Museum has produced a work,¹ somewhat lengthy, it is true, but, as it deals with a period of some five thousand years, how could it be otherwise? The nine light, handy volumes of large type which take you from the kings before Menes to Cleopatra are none too many. Mr Budge started with an admirable principle, to which he has held fast throughout

his whole work—he has set down only known facts, and has relegated theories either to supplementary chapters or to footnotes. No visitor to Egypt should fail to consult these volumes. His pleasure and his knowledge will be increased, and he will find that they open to him vistas of human power and activity of which he had previously but the faintest glimmerings. Mr Budge has in another work made students of Egyptian antiquities his debtors. In the ‘Book of the Dead,’ published in 1901, he has given a complete translation of the earliest of religious compositions,—a work which was well known in Egypt before the days of the kings of the First Dynasty, in fact, the oldest bit of literature which has come down to us.

“I cannot say that I expect much from mere Egyptian antiquities. Almost everything really (that is, intellectually) great in that country seems to me of Grecian origin.” So said Coleridge in his ‘Table-Talk’ in 1823. How hard it is even for a man of genius to prophesy! Eighty years ago Egypt was the land of the Pyramids and Cleopatra—the rest was silence. Lepsius and Wilkinson had not begun their studies, the Rosetta Stone had been found (1799), and Young’s ‘Conjectural Translation’ had appeared some nine years before, but Champollion’s famous ‘Précis’ did not appear till the following year. There was

¹ A History of Egypt from the End of the Neolithic Period to the Death of Cleopatra VII. Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co. 1902.

every excuse, therefore, for Coleridge; but he made a wondrous bad figure in a prophet's mantle. Now most are agreed that the history of Egypt is the most important study for the student of early civilisation. Prehistoric man—the intelligent being who made flint instruments hundreds of years before any other human records appear—flourished, not on the banks of the Nile as it now runs, but up on the plateaux which are now desert and uninhabitable. Paleolithic man—the man who, according to some flint experts, lived 20,000 years before Neolithic man chipped his flints into knives and pruning-hooks,—he too flourished in deserts, then probably washed by the waves of the Mediterranean, now in places strewn with his remains, over which man for tens of centuries has passed unheeding. The preservative power of the desert is appalling. To stand by the recently opened grave of a man who lived before the First Dynasty of Egyptian kings—i.e., some 7000 years ago—to see his poor crouched skeleton lying, with the black-topped earthenware vessels which contained food or other funeral offerings placed there by loving hands, and to recognise all that has happened around this poor little grave during all these centuries, gives you a feeling of humility such as nothing else can do. He was a great man in his day, possibly the Wellington of his race, mayhap their Shakespeare. Here are his white bones, his gold orna-

ments, his carefully prepared grave, now disturbed for the first time by an explorer who was born at Chicago, and who, *horribile dictu*, calls him a “deader”; who robs his grave of its treasures, such as they are, and tosses out the bones that they may dissolve the quicker in the air. He has already got a good prehistoric tomb for his museum, and the rest may perish,—the sooner the better,—for then Chicago or Johns Hopkins, or whatever it may be, has the greater chance of a unique specimen. These things are done *consule* Cromer, and posterity may have some criticisms to make on the subject.

From prehistoric times to the days when the great fortress near Hieraconpolis was garrisoned is a long step, probably, as long as there is between the day when Julius cast his eagle eye across the Channel at the white cliffs of Albion, till that day when the great white Queen was borne from her home at Osborne to her last resting-place near the Norman Tower at Windsor. That comprises our island story so far; the other is but a series of unknown incidents in the long roll of the story of Egypt. For Hieraconpolis flourished before the Pyramids were built, and the fortress beyond it in the desert belongs to still earlier times. There it stands to this day—four-square, with its walls of unbaked brick some thirty feet thick, a lasting record of a strenuous, fighting race. Who used it, who fought against it, are alike unknown. There it

is in the desert, miles from the present course of the Nile, as well—nay, better—preserved than Tantallon, with no beauty but its size and strength, “the oldest building in the world,” as a great Eastern scholar has called it.

Hieraconpolis itself flourished long before the days of the first pyramid builders; it continued to be a sacred and an important city down to the time of the Sixth Dynasty at any rate—*i.e.*, to 3200 B.C.—for the bronze portrait statues of King Pepi (fl. 3233 B.C.) and his son, now skilfully restored and set up in the Cairo Museum, were found here by Mr Quibell. The city is now little more than a mound of rubbish. It yielded up its treasures only in 1897 and 1898. Amongst them are the lovely gold-headed hawk, the two statues of Kha-sekhen, the first king of the Second Dynasty, the oldest statues in the world, which date from 4100 B.C. at least. From Hieraconpolis also came the engraved green slate “palette” which bears the name of a king who reigned centuries before him whose statues are the earliest sculptor’s masterpieces—a king of the dynasty before Menes. These examples of art are additional proofs of the completeness of the early civilisation of Egypt. M. de Morgan’s discoveries at Negada in 1897 are believed by many to take us back to Menes. There is some doubt; but if the tomb at Negada is really that of Menes, then it is proved not only that he is not a mythical personage (his bones, if they are

his bones, are in the Cairo Museum), but that he was an actual sovereign of Egypt, and further, to quote Professor Sayce, “instead of representing the dawn of Egyptian history, Menes must have come at the end of a long period of development in culture.” The slate palette is itself a proof of this.

The work goes on. ’Tis but a few weeks since Mr Howard Carter, the inspector of the monuments of Upper Egypt, had the choice pleasure—the “good joy,” as Leigh Hunt’s young folks would have said—of being the first after some three thousand years to enter the rock-hewn sepulchre of Thothmes IV. The body of this monarch of the Eighteenth Dynasty had been found some time ago in the tomb of his father Amenhotep II., where it seems to have been removed for safety at an early date: it is now in the Cairo Museum. The tomb is of the usual kind, decorated with paintings illustrating the Book of the Dead. There are several side-chambers: in one of these were found mummified loins of beef and legs of mutton, and trussed ducks and geese. The doors were secured by clay seals which are of peculiar interest: they are the earliest known examples of the art of printing, for the raised portions of the seal had been smeared with blue ink before they were impressed on the seal—more than three thousand years before Gutenberg or Coster. The tomb had been rifled in very

early times, and was restored by Horemheb, or Heru-em-heb as Mr Budge more correctly calls him. The gold ornaments which doubtless adorned the mummy and the coffin were stolen by thieves who lived before the Exodus; the choice goblets, cups, and exquisite vases of blue and variegated glass, whose fragments were found by Mr Carter, were cast aside by resurrectionists who pursued their nefarious calling before Moses tended the flocks of Jethro. They, however, happily left the chariot of the king, the carriage in which he drove through the streets of Thebes, and beside it, lying in the dry and friendly dust, is the leather glove which his majesty wore when he handled the reins himself. This glove gives a personal touch of startling significance. You can picture Thothmes, the man who married a princess of Mesopotamia three thousand four hundred years ago, descending the steps of his Theban palace, viewing the prancing steeds, and slowly drawing on this very glove as he entered this very chariot to drive along the avenue of sphinxes, whose battered remains are seen by every tourist of this twentieth century. The chariot is a work of art. It is covered with carvings representing scenes from the king's Syrian campaigns, and, according to report, these are of a very high order of art, with exquisitely finished detail. The king who repaired this tomb of Thothmes IV. was a monarch of great

power, who did more to restore Egypt to its high place than any of his immediate predecessors of the Eighteenth Dynasty. He was a wise ruler, and it is interesting to remember that it was he who first decreed (three thousand years ago) that a workman's tools should not be seized for debt.

Thus every year brings some new inscription to light, a new fact to our knowledge. A statue is discovered here, a scarab there, a fragment of papyrus is rescued from a mummy-case in the Fayoum, an inscribed bit of pottery is found in Upper Egypt. These are each a contribution to history; any one of them may smash a theory or confirm a belief. How, then, can a complete history of Egypt be looked for? Excavate, excavate, excavate! is the cry of the student. Accumulate facts, and let the future provide its Gibbon, who shall assimilate them and present their results to a public which is too ignorant and too hurried to watch with interest the piecing together of the materials of which history is made. For, excellent as is the work of Professor Petrie and Mr Budge,—not to speak of M. Maspéro's fascinating but elusive volumes,—little has yet been done by anybody beyond arranging the bones of the skeleton.

Wilkinson made us understand long ago something of the social and religious life of ancient Egypt. Professor Sayce has, with the hand of a

master, depicted the Egypt of the times of Abraham and the Exodus.¹ He has at the same time given the most readable, as well as a thoroughly scholarly, outline of the whole story of ancient Egypt. The equipment of the perfect Egyptologist is possessed by none to a greater extent than by Professor Sayce. For to understand everything in the records of Egypt requires more than a knowledge of hieroglyphics. Your Egyptologist must know cuneiform; he must have the history of Babylon at his finger-ends; he must be an Assyriologist (here Professor Maspéro is at fault); he must know all about the Hittites; Moab need not be his wash-pot, but should be as familiar. He must be not merely a Greek scholar, but should be a paleographer, and able to read the scripts of all the centuries. He must know all about flint instruments. He may trust to Professor Schweinfurth for his botany, but a knowledge of the elementary facts of geology is essential. He should be an engineer and an architect, and, not least, an astronomer. When this wonder of the age arrives, we shall have perhaps a history of Egypt written at first hand. It would be an inspired book; but if, in addition to having all these gifts and accomplishments, the author is not also a man of letters, it too would serve only as material for the use of a man of genius of a later dynasty.

A chronicle of Egypt is pos-

sible, with many gaps which it is to be feared will never be fully filled. That is what Mr Budge and Professor Petrie have attempted to give us, and both deserve the gratitude of those who will come after them and enter into their labours.

Chronicles are but dry reading, and most who read for pleasure turn from works, however admirable for other qualities, which lack the hand of the literary artist. Your modern Egyptologist despises the equipment of the man of letters—"fine writing" to him means bad science. So be it: the man of science must come first, and at the present stage it would appear that the Egyptologists are right. M. Maspéro has a Frenchman's inborn sense of style. His books are fascinating. In the main he is accurate, but often he is not; and it is to be feared that his occasional lack of a first-hand knowledge has led him into errors of detail which even in a fourth edition mar, in the eyes of students at any rate, the excellence of his monumental volumes.

Americans are excavating and publishing the result of their work in volumes, each of which contains a new historical document, issued in limited editions to American societies or to the members of American universities. The English Exploration Fund does admirable work. Year by year it adds to the original material

¹ The Egypt of the Hebrews and Herodotus. By the Rev. A. H. Sayce. 3rd edition. London: Rivingtons. 1902.

which the future Gibbon must study. Private enterprise adds to the tale—witness the Amherst Papyri, published in 1900 and 1901. It is a far cry from the Fourth Dynasty to the Ptolemies; but the Ptolemaic period is of interest to every student of Greek, who year by year is introduced to fresh fragments of the great poets, to verses of Sappho, to scraps of plays, and the like.

In 1897 Messrs Grenfell and Hunt published the 'Logia Jesou, Sayings of our Lord,' and arrested the attention of Christendom thereby. In the same year Dr Kenyon gave us the poems of Bacchylides¹ and enlarged the literature of the world. Hyperides, Herondas, a historical work of Aristotle, and fragments of Sappho have been rescued from mummy-cases; but from a purely literary point of view the discovery of Bacchylides is probably the most important of all the finds. Before 1897 this poet was unknown save from one or two chance quotations; now, as Dr Kenyon says, "his name may once more be reckoned among those of the authors whose works are alive and form part of the literary possessions of the modern world." School-boys may perhaps feel no gratitude to Bacchylides—for his twenty new lyrics have enriched our lexicons with 102 new words!

How much has been de-

stroyed, how much may still be found, are questions equally unprofitable. The destruction of records during recent years has undoubtedly been great. Take, for example, the celebrated Tell el Amarna tablets. The heretic king Akhenaten left Thebes and established a capital farther down the Nile, where he could worship his god in his own fashion. During his reign, about 1500 B.C., this city flourished, and the State archives of his father's reign seem to have been removed thither. His successors soon abandoned both his heresy and the city founded to preserve it, and returned to Thebes and the orthodox sway of the priests of Amen Ra, and the capital which the disk-worshipper had beautified with a new convention of art, also a heresy in the eyes of the priests, was left to ruin. Professor Petrie² tells how

"a few years ago the natives, while plundering about the ruins and carrying off Akhenaten's bricks for their modern houses, lit upon 'the place of the records of the palace of the king' containing many hundreds of clay tablets. These were shown to dealers: they sent some to Dr Oppert of Paris, who pronounced them to be forgeries; others were sent to M. Grebaut, then head of the Egyptian Department of Antiquities, and were treated by him with customary silence. At last, when they were supposed to be almost worthless, a quantity were carried in sacks to Luxor to hawk about among the dealers there, and these were largely

¹ The Poems of Bacchylides. Edited by Frederick G. Kenyon, D.Litt. Printed by order of the Trustees of the British Museum.

² Syria in Egypt, from the Tell el Amarna Letters. By W. M. Flinders Petrie, D.C.L., &c. London: Methuen. 1898.

ground to pieces on the way. What has been preserved, therefore, is but a wreck of what might have been. . . . The tablets reaching the dealers' hands became known, and were bought up mainly for the British Museum or the Berlin Museum. Some drifted to the St Petersburg, Paris, and Cairo Museums, and some into private collections. A similar miserable fate attends all discoveries in Egypt unless made by a skilled observer, as witness the palace of Rameses III. at Tell el Yehudiyeh, the Deir el Bahri treasure, the cemetery of Ekhmin, the palace of Amenhotep III. at Thebes, as well as unnumbered towns and cemeteries throughout the land."

The Tell el Amarna (or Tel Amarna, or, according to Colonel Conder, Amarna *tout simple*) tablets contain letters to the King of Egypt (Amenhotep III. and his son Amenhotep IV. or Akhenaten) from Syria, and a few, so to say, press copies of replies. They are full of information as to politics, history, and social relations. They prove one thing, at any rate—that cuneiform was known and used in Egypt in the fifteenth century B.C. Of this fact Colonel Conder makes the utmost use in his learned and vastly interesting volume 'The First Bible.'¹ The knowledge of cuneiform by the Egyptians of times not remote from the days of Moses is, however, but a link in a chain of evidence which this learned author has forged to prove that the first five books of the Bible at any rate were originally written not in the Hebrew script but in the older cuneiform. Colonel Conder's argu-

ments are marshalled with dialectic skill, and presented with an admirable lucidity. None but an Assyriologist could venture to controvert them.

Colonel Conder deals in passing with the vexed question of the date of the Exodus. So far the records of Egypt are entirely silent on this incident, and theories have centuries in which to gambol. Most Egyptologists have voted for about 1300 B.C. and the reign of Menepthah. M. Maspéro, whose name carries no small authority, has suggested an even later date. Colonel Conder, with a courage founded on a theory which is, at the very least, plausible, takes us back some three hundred years. He does not venture to select a reign, but contents himself with stating, and supporting his statement by no contemptible proofs, that the Exodus took place under the Eighteenth and not the Nineteenth Dynasty. We must have more light before this knotty point can be settled. The heretic Akhenaten was undoubtedly the weakest king of the Eighteenth Dynasty, but it is incredible that he should have worried himself in his artistic retreat at Amarna about such matters as plagues: besides, though we know all about his daughters, there is no mention of his ever having had a son. The date of the Exodus is still uncertain, and Colonel Conder, while he has certainly disturbed established

¹ The First Bible. By Colonel C. R. Conder, LL.D., M.R.A.S., R.E. William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. 1902.

beliefs, has not solved the problem. Possibly his criticism may lead Egyptologists to find a new theory which may ultimately lead to truth. 'Tis a wise maxim, "Take nothing for granted." The wisdom of our ancestors is often in the eyes of men of science but a house of cards, which a puff of criticism can destroy. What happens when the critic is found to be but a theorist with a mistake for his major premiss? Colonel Conder has done good work here and elsewhere in criticising the critics. Dr Robertson Smith was not omniscient. His younger namesake may regard Jacob as a myth and the life of Joseph as a fairy tale; but he must know more of the learning of the

East before his theories can disturb any but the callow youths of theological colleges. So far, attacks on the history of the Old Testament have been remarkable only for their failure. We do not know enough to criticise. Here as elsewhere the little knowledge brings the danger. The theory of to-day is the exploded heresy of tomorrow. More study and less assertion is what is wanted everywhere in the domain of Eastern learning. Let Egyptologists stick to their monuments and theologians to their linguistic studies, and when we know more we shall perhaps be able to say when Joseph was sold into Egypt and in what century the Sphinx was hewn from the living rock.

LOVE'S BLOSSOMING.

BELOVED, in the garden of my heart
There fell one night a solitary seed:
I knew not whence it came nor what its part,
Nor of what nourishment it might have need.
Wearied with wandering through the ether wide
It slept, and, when its weariness was gone,
Said, "In this pleasant spot will I abide,
And with the fairest claim comparison."
Startled, I watched with keen and constant eyes
The growth to bud and blossom of my guest,
Like one to whom 'tis very Paradise
To see her infant drain her ample breast;
And, lo! I found one happy evening hour
My heart was harbouring Love's immortal flower.

LOVE'S DISDAIN.

OUR love is not the prating world's concern:
What right have they thy worth to criticise?
How can they hope thy graces to discern,
Who only own unsympathetic eyes?
It may be that they think thou art not fair,
And thy great goodness merely commonplace,
When, all the while, it is my pen's despair
In living lines these very things to trace.
To me thou art a being bright as day,
Fairer than Truth, if such a thing could be,
Pure as the Maid who shames the stars away,
And to her bosom draws the restless sea.
Let no one seek these merits to disprove,
Who has not seen thee through the eyes of love.

JAMES WHITEHEAD.

JOSEPH HENRY SHORTHOUSE.

A WORLD not very careful, perhaps, for the delicacies of fine literature, will scarcely miss one so scrupulous in his devotion to all that was best in letters as was Mr Shorthouse. The author, one might say, of one book, 'John Inglesant,' he addressed the larger public, as it were, by chance. Quiet and retiring above all other men, he had his popularity, such as it was, thrust upon him.

It is extraordinary that some of the most precious things in our literature have been the work of amateurs. Indeed it is almost impossible to think of Sir Thomas Browne or Walter Pater or Joseph Henry Shorthouse coming down into the arena and fighting with beasts at Ephesus or another city to earn their bread by professional literature. Their exquisite work, limited in many ways though we may be compelled to admit it to be, would have lost all its restful and exquisite charm if they had been obliged to express their thoughts "off-hand," as it were,—if they had been compelled to practise writing as a business. "Pater not exquisite!" exclaims a writer of our day, whose charm is itself something of a leisured old-world grace—"Pater not exquisite! a poor sort of Pater that would be!" It was the same with Shorthouse. He gave more than seven years to the writing of 'John Inglesant,' even as Mr Pater gave six years to the writing of

'Marius the Epicurean.' There is, too, something of a spiritual likeness at any rate between the two books. At least, there is nothing at all like 'John Inglesant,' in all English literature, except perhaps 'Marius the Epicurean.' Search how we may, there is nothing like it: greater books there are in plenty, and books written in a more perfect style, better constructed, and greater in every sense of the word, but nothing with just the same charm, nothing that gives us just the same pleasure, free as we are of that old world immersed in its conflicts and arguments, a little passionate perhaps over its religious difficulties, and yet all the time in touch with to-day by reason of some exquisite spiritual perception possessed by the author, with which he captures us, suggesting something of those perfect words of St Augustine, "*Fecisti nos ad Te, et irrequietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in Te.*"

'John Inglesant' was published in 1881, the MS. having been finished in 1877. A romance without any of the noise now associated with "historical" novels, it was concerned chiefly after all with the spiritual thoughts and ideas of the hero. In it is to be found perhaps the most beautiful sermon in all fiction. It was preached in the Jesuits' church in the Rue St Martin in Paris:—

"The dim light found its way into the vast church from the stained

windows; a lamp burning before some shrine shone partially on the preacher, as he stood in the stone pulpit. . . . He was a young man, thin and sad-looking, and spoke slowly and with long pauses and intervals, but with an intense eagerness and pathos that went to every heart. The first words Inglesant heard, as he reached the nearest unoccupied place, were these—

“‘Ah! if you adored a God crowned with roses and with pearls it were nothing strange; but to prostrate yourselves daily before a crucifix charged with nails and thorns—you living in such excess and superfluity in the flesh dissolved in softness,—how can that be but cruel? Ah, think of that crucifix as you lie warm in silken curtains, perfumed with eau de naffe, as you sit at dainty feasts, as you ride forth in the sunshine in gallantry. He is cold and naked; He is alone; behind Him the sky is dreary and streaked with darkening clouds, for the night cometh—the night of God. His locks are wet with driving rain; His hair is frozen with the sleet; His beauty is departed from Him—all men and God also, and the holy angels hide their faces. He is crowned with thorns but you with garlands. He wears nothing in His hands but piercing nails; you have rubies and diamonds in yours. Ah! will you tell me you can still be faithful though in brave array? I give that answer which Tertullian gave, ‘I fear His neck snared with wreaths and ropes of pearls and emeralds. I fear the sound of persecution can find no entrance there.’”

Some voice of loving despair, some ineffable sorrow, seems to have come home at least to the heart of the preacher, at the sight of the world and all the glory of it. And it is in such passages as that, and in the simple and exquisite narrative power that the book displays, that we find the secret of the charm that ‘John Inglesant’ has for us. Quietness—beyond

any other writer of our time, with the exception of Mr Pater—it was that which delighted Mr Shorthouse; it is with that same quietness that he would delight us. There is no noisy tragedy, nor noisier and more banal “happy ending at the altar” at the end of ‘John Inglesant.’ It ends in a kind of resignation, an apprehension, at any rate, that life is to be lived. And it was in that refusal of melodramatic tragedy or impossible felicity that the strength of the book lay. Not overmuch sad nor very merry, but fulfilled with a kind of subtle yet very simple beauty, it is the unique achievement of the book. A sense of sun and moon and stars, such as we feel in childhood; a love of and joy in a lovely world; a profound knowledge of the tragedy of death, which, among other truths, tells us that our friends surely will soon behave themselves as though we had never been—such are the things we find, perhaps a little to our surprise, in a romance that has little in common with the modern novel. And in the mere matter (as it is generally considered) of form itself we find at least the beginnings of a new understanding of it. No romantic tale of flood or field, no story of old splendours, no love-tale “stuffed with piteous words” of Sir Walter or another, has so perfectly found the triumphant method of beginning a novel as, it seems to me, has Mr Shorthouse.

“During my second year at Oxford,” he writes, “I became

acquainted with a Roman Catholic gentleman, the eldest son of a family long resident on the borders of Shropshire towards Wales. My friend, whose name was Fisher, . . . "Was anything ever more certain of holding our attention from the beginning than that perfect opening? In some inexplicable way that and what immediately follows suggest the whole book. Having read so far, we are compelled to continue, being certain of our reward. For it is in 'John Inglesant,' rather than in any other romance, that those passionate years of the seventeenth century live again—that merry England "before the war," with her silent woods and tiny villages, her strange old-world customs and thoughts and stories, that have vanished for ever since that day when majesty knelt upon the scaffold and the head of the White King fell at the shouting of the people and the soldiers. Like a ghost almost, the "fair and fatal" king moves mysteriously on the verge of the page as we read that First Part of the 'History of John Inglesant.' But it is with such "historical" yet wholly romantic figures as Nicholas Ferrar and his "Protestant" nuns, Mistress Collet and the rest, with the sinister yet admirable figure of the Jesuit who taught Johnny Inglesant all he knew, with the sceptic Hobbes and with the beautiful Queen Henrietta Maria, that we are really occupied, however slightly they may affect the story.

For multitudes of every

generation the Catholic Church has had a profound æsthetic charm. But for many people doubtless in England something of the same charm, a perfection not less rare and delightful, was revealed in the English Church too, it may well be for the first time, in 'John Inglesant.' Perhaps that may go some way to explain why this book has been so beloved. Not so much for its own sake, for its charm, its delightful pictures of England and Italy, its dainty philosophies, its romance,—but for the sake of its exposition of the ideal perfection of the Church of England, it has been loved. It is as though John Inglesant had taken upon him, as it were, the solution of the difficulty that has involved in its mazes the flower of our race, that hard choice between two systems antagonistic, yet with much in common, both aiming at the same or nearly the same perfection—and had chosen, well, the simpler way. There is something of this, certainly, suggested by the author himself in that letter from Mr Valentine Lee that closes the book.

It has been said without much truth, as I think, that the Second Part of 'John Inglesant' was not the equal of the first. Dealing almost entirely with Italy, it has, necessarily almost, since the writer had never been there, a beauty less definite than the first part, which dealt with English scenes, around Little Gidding, Oxford, Chester, Shropshire, and London, well known and

loved. And yet that evocation of Italy in the Second Part is certainly one of the most extraordinary accomplishments in modern English literature. The influence of Italy has always been profound in our literature even from the beginning, and in 'John Inglesant' it is as though the dreams of generations of ancestors, longing for the mystery of sunlight, the wearying heat of summer, the burning languor of the South, the perfection of the soft sky, had suddenly blossomed in pleasant divine fashion in this book written in Birmingham in such leisure as business allows, more than twenty years ago. Concerned as the First Part is almost entirely with a series of spiritual crises, one is relieved to come upon the more sensuous delight of the Second Part among a people more learned in life, more passionate for delight, more pagan, more human perhaps than the English.

In 'Marius the Epicurean' Walter Pater gave us a book profound and simple, bounded by the great refusals of an artist, perfect in form, perfect in prose, stooping to nothing, having the dignity of a great poem and the thoughtfulness that is characteristic of the writers of the Augustan age. And 'John Inglesant,' too, is concerned with the inner life of a young man: it touches the absolute, the universal, in a way that is very rare in English romance. How far removed are we from the splendid vitality, the facile vulgarities, of

Dickens and Thackeray, and the blatant life of their day, which, for what I know, may be true enough, only it should have come to us softened and made immortal by the temperament of the writer. Consider the youth of Marius and the youth of Inglesant, and the eternal of truthfulness of both: they are not less true to life in our day than to life in the ages of Marcus Aurelius or Charles I. of England. Consider them, and then think of the youth of Pendennis, who instead of Flavian had Mr Foker for friend, who loved not Mary Collet but Miss Costigan,—consider all the vulgar sentiment of those monstrous people, the unthinkable lie they have become. Will it be so too with 'Marius' and with 'John Inglesant'? If the great works of Dickens and Thackeray have come to be read, as it were, with the historic sense, shall not these lesser works also fade even more surely? It may be so; and yet the beauty for which Shorthouse or Pater sought so laboriously is betrayed for ever to captivity in their work. Was it beauty too that the great writers, Dickens and Thackeray, sought for? Who can tell? at least we know that the work of Pater, and of Shorthouse too in a lesser way, was concerned first of all with beauty. If Mr Shorthouse has scarcely attained the perfection of form which Walter Pater achieved, he has, we may believe, given us a figure that can never grow old. John Inglesant is the Hamlet of our modern world and country; in him is personified

something perhaps of the tragedy of our race. 'Concerned with things no less noble and, as we may believe, no less eternal than those which troubled the Prince of Denmark, he has for many the same curious fascination; and, within far narrower limitations, he too is typical of the tragedy of thought.

And it is, as I think, for the most part in that Second Part, in Italy, in the company of Cardinals and Princes, Convicts and Bravos, Monks and Priests, and Musicians and Beggars, that we find that apprehension, as it were, of the underlying things of life that makes 'John Inglesant' a very precious book. It is sufficiently easy to point out that Mr Shorthouse was under grave obligations to John Evelyn and to James Dennistoun; that the incident, for instance, of the Cardinal Rinuccini, whom Inglesant met on his way to Florence, travelling with his "four-post" bed, is due to John Evelyn, and that almost the whole of the story of the Duke of Umbria's Court is from the 'Memoirs of the Dukes of Urbino,' a book that should be reprinted, since it is one of the most valuable contributions in English to the History of the Renaissance. But when one has told this, one has accomplished nothing. It is, however, matter of serious concern that John Inglesant never completes the mission he was charged with by the Queen of England, and that he becomes a more or less irresponsible pilgrim in Italy. But for many minds the book will always

remain unique, a thing of beauty moving along the heights of Romance, something in the nature of a mystery, seeing that it had no obvious forebears.

We accept 'John Inglesant' as the author's best work, and in that we are right, but it was not his only work. Had 'Sir Percival' or 'Blanche Lady Falaise' come to us as the work of another writer, as perhaps his only books, we should have accepted them with more graciousness, more appreciation of their fragile beauty. As the younger brother and sister of 'John Inglesant,' they are perhaps a little unworthy of so high a privilege, yet they are without doubt books of a great fascination, a kind of nobility so rare as to be very valuable. 'The Countess Eve,' 'Little Schoolmaster Mark,' 'The Teacher of the Violin,' were indeed unworthy of him. But in a short story of Wordsworth as a mystical platonist, there is more than a little of the old scholarship and charm. For though "defrauded," as was Charles Lamb, "of the sweet food of academic institutions," Shorthouse was essentially a scholar, caring more for the fineness of literature than for almost anything else in the world. Books, as he has said, were his recreation, and if the essence of scholarship may be tested, surely it lies in the power it gives of evoking, of realising, those old times long ago, with all their attributes and limitations. He, too, as well as Lamb, understood the genius of places, and in his

picture of Little Gidding, for instance, we see with what care he had been over the ground, deciphering the gravestones, his mind already full of knowledge of that strangely romantic place which his very eyes at last had seen. As one comes on that tiny chapel nowadays out of the hurly-burly of our world, I think, among all the romantic figures that have passed by there, — Nicholas Ferrar, and Mary Collet, and King Charles I., and Prince Rupert, and Herbert and Crashaw, that exquisite mystic who died far away in Italy, Canon of Loretto,—the sweetest and the most noble, and the one we think of most, and realise most easily, is John Inglesant, or shall we say Joseph Henry Shorthouse?

And so the author of 'John Inglesant' is at his best when he comes to write of Herbert. The one ascetic of that mystical age, Herbert seems to have attracted Mr Shorthouse more than any other figure of the time. He wrote a very beautiful preface for a reprint of the first edition of his poems. And though Herbert only comes indirectly into 'John Inglesant,' it is a temperament and character such as Herbert's that had Mr Shorthouse's most profound admiration.

"That George Herbert's tastes may have led him towards a courtier's and a statesman's life need not be denied," he writes. "Churchmen were often statesmen in those days, and it very naturally seemed to a religious man that he could do God's service as well in one walk as in another; but the concluding years of George Herbert's life, the 'Country Parson,' and the

activity and sweetness that marked his pastoral life at Bemerton, amidst ever-increasing weakness and approaching death, were not the results of disappointed political hopes. . . . George Herbert, a younger son, always of a delicate constitution and of a refined nature, possessed also all the instincts and aspirations of the proud race from which he sprang. . . . From a child piety was instinctive with him, but all through his life the instincts of a gentleman and a courtier were ever with him. It was no clannish ignorance of the world's ways that led him to renounce them."

Those last two sentences might have been written of John Inglesant with equal truth. And, indeed, in all Mr Shorthouse's work the man of piety must have something of a peculiar refinement, a special grace, something that one connects with courts and courtiers. In 'Blanche Lady Falaise' the parson whom Blanche loved was a most acceptable preacher, but Falaise condemned him as "bad form," and, as we might have felt sure, he came to a disgraceful end. Well, it is perhaps the peculiar charm of the seventeenth century to have produced a number of such men as Herbert—I mean in their character of courtier and saint. In those days one could find the man of profound piety possessed of an exquisite refinement, a man of the world, a courtier, and a gallant. Puritanism perhaps failed to understand this type of character; and in its effort to kill it utterly and banish it from our world it pronounced its own death-sentence, opposed as it was to the whole of European culture and the Renaissance.

It was the realisation of this, or something like this, that turned Mr Shorthouse's mind towards the English Church, which he was later to serve so profoundly. It came as a surprise to many of his readers to find that, at least in his later years, Mr Shorthouse was so uncompromising a Protestant as he proved himself to be in a perhaps unfortunate preface to Mr Galton's book, 'The Message and Position of the Church of England.' It was a little saddening to find the author of 'John Inglesant' using language of a strange virulence and violence towards that Church he had striven to interpret with a certain generosity in his great book. But in turning again the pages of his masterpiece all such misapprehension is forgotten in an enthusiasm for the genius of a book so quiet and so lovely.

And now that he is dead, it is well we should think a little of our poverty. He has left no successor. Unique as he was, that was impossible; but nevertheless we shall never forget him. On his coffin one laid a wreath, as it is said, whereon he had written, "A tribute of admiration and reverence from one who owes all that is best in him to 'John Inglesant.'"

It is for such tributes of simplicity that it may well be the dead yearn, and having them, are a little satisfied. And though such things have nothing to do with artistic merit or demerit, to have cheered but one single poor man in the world is to have apprehended just for a moment during a single heart's beat the Love of God, and so to have had an anticipation of immortality.

EDWARD HUTTON.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE RETURN OF MR CHAMBERLAIN—THE SECRET OF HIS POPULARITY—A CENTURY OF FRENCH FICTION—BALZAC AND REALISM—THE DIVISIONS OF THE SCHOOLS—A COMPARISON—"ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON THE DRAMATIST"—MR PINERO'S VIEW—LITERATURE AND THE STAGE.

THE return of Mr Chamberlain from South Africa is an event of Imperial interest. Even if he had done no more than see with his own eyes the vast country which it is his business to administer, the journey would not have been taken in vain. For the journey symbolises once and for always a new pride in our colonial possessions, a new view of our colonial responsibilities. The days in which the Colonies were thrown with War under the control of one Minister, just as Divorce and the Admiralty are flung together in one court, are gone for ever. To-day we all recognise that our relations with our colonies are of greater import than our relations with the continent of Europe, and Mr Chamberlain, by traversing the weary length of our possessions in South Africa, has given a practical proof of our awakened interest. He is the first Colonial Minister to set foot in a British colony, and his enterprise is a good augury of solid friendship and sound understanding.

That Mr Chamberlain's achievement is generally recognised is proved by the fact that he has returned to a popularity such as few modern statesmen have enjoyed.

He is not worshipped in that spirit of blind surrender which inspired the devotees of Mr Gladstone. He has not those qualities, commonly called "magnetic," which mischievously deceive the people. Though he once said that the world was ruled by sentiment, he is himself the least sentimental of men or rulers. His popularity, moreover, cannot be explained by any tricks of voice or expression. He does not employ his oratorical gifts to befog or bamboozle his hearers. His speech is neither indefinite nor ornate. In other words, he does not pose before the people as a rhetorician, nor puzzle his fellows by the artifices of the *cabotin*. Were it not for the tiresome advertisement of his orchid, we might conclude that he was not so much a human being as a political machine. Yet of his influence there can be no doubt, and strange though it seem, he is clearly respected for his statesmanlike qualities and his intrepid courage.

Above all, he is a fighter. "I would sooner have the hatred of any man than his contempt," said he some years since, and he has never stayed to conciliate his opponents. That, we imagine, gives him

the firmest hold upon his compatriots, who, deeply as they love a trite sentiment, by a strange perversity love a hard blow almost as well. Now, his best speeches have always been a series of blows, well aimed and quickly delivered, and they have naturally stirred the blood of Englishmen, who have not yet forgotten the glories of the prize-ring. When Mr Chamberlain replied to Count von Bülow with the arrogant phrase, "What I have said, I have said," there was no man outside the ranks of the pro-Boers who did not feel that he had participated in an act of personal revenge. And while Mr Chamberlain knows how to hit himself, he can take his punishment like the bruiser that he is. During the last four years he has been assailed throughout Europe and America with unexampled acrimony, but he has never withdrawn from the attack, nor shown the smallest discomfort. His enemies object, with a certain truth, that he lacks discretion. He does not always remember the canons of diplomatic courtesy. He has offended France and outraged Russia by a notorious reference to a long spoon, and there are many countries in which he is still used as a bogey to frighten refractory children withal. But why should he show courtesy to those who long ago exhausted a rich vocabulary in his abuse? Why should he give quarter who asks none? Again, the fighting attitude is intelligible and approved, and so long as

his fighting blood is up, so long will Mr Chamberlain appeal to the intellect, and even to the heart, of Englishmen.

From this it follows that Mr Chamberlain is rather a practical statesman than a political philosopher. He would rather administer than think. If there is a battle to fight, or conflicting interests to conciliate, he is ready for the task; but he is not very clever at theorising about it, or at holding fast to a first principle. In brief, he knows not the meaning of pedantry, and so little does he esteem consistency, that there are very few opinions which at one time or another he has not held. And for this his superficial opponents, with a pitiful lack of humour, have taken him gravely to task. They have quoted old speeches to confute the new ones; they have proved their ingenuity in parallel columns, and they might as well have sown the wind or counted the sands. Mr Chamberlain is esteemed not for what he has said, but for what he has done, and it is immaterial if the opportunist of 1903 was once a Republican, if the Radical of 1870 is to-day the most eloquent champion of the Constitution. For there is nothing which the practical man so easily outgrows as the vain theories of youth, and it must be remembered in Mr Chamberlain's favour that he was not precocious. He made his first entry into politics at forty, and though he had waited long for his chance, he used it so well that in four

years he was a Cabinet Minister. Nor did he at once shake off the weight of municipal theories. In 1886 this fighting Minister, who has controlled the greatest war we have witnessed for eighty years, declined the position of First Lord of the Admiralty, "because he thought it was hardly congenial or consistent with a Radical's position that he should occupy the headship of one of the great spending and fighting offices of the State." But many things have happened since 1886, and Mr Chamberlain is now ready, if need be, to spend and fight with the best of them.

But, Radical though he was, and perhaps is, Mr Chamberlain was always eager for the honour of England and the unity of the Empire. If he erred twenty years ago in the government of South Africa, he erred by acquiescence, and because, like the rest, he was hypnotised by Mr Gladstone. And to-day he has made so magnificent an amend, that we are glad to forget the past and to mark the history of this year with a white stone. But while his fellow-countrymen admire Mr Chamberlain for his pluck, there is one other quality in him which wins him an increased and a deserved popularity. He is frankly truthful. When he left England for South Africa, he warned us not to expect from his mission more than it was possible for him to accomplish. He would raise no false hopes, he would flatter

by no vain words. And he comes back to England with the same simple words upon his tongue. He begs his enthusiastic compatriots, "in their generous appreciation, not to overrate the results which have been achieved." Nor is this directness of speech reserved for great occasions. Throughout his journey in Africa he spoke plainly to all classes and to every race. He spared no one, he managed nobody. He told Dutch and English of their faults with the same candour; and we imagine that those who listened to him in the Raadzaal at Pretoria, to give but one instance, will never forget either the tone or the substance of his speech. He not only knew his mind—he could make others know it; and in the strong self-confidence of Mr Chamberlain the falsehood and tergiversation of Majuba, of which crime he too was *particeps*, were easily forgotten.

"I have come here in a spirit of conciliation," said he, "but also in a spirit of firmness," and in that spirit he journeyed through Africa, in that spirit he has returned to London. That he has allayed all suspicion, that he has smoothed away all difficulties, no sane man supposes; but at least he has familiarised himself with the problems which disturb the peace of Africa, and he is more resolute than ever to make an end of them. As we should expect, he approaches the question like the practical statesman that he is. He points out that the

Briton abroad retains after many years a pride in the mother country. The Dutch in Africa can appeal to no such sentiment. They know no mother country save the province in which they were born. What should they know of an Empire, whose experience is too often limited by a neighbour's farm? But it is Mr Chamberlain's hope that "this provincial feeling will give way before a wider conception of national destiny, and that our Dutch fellow-subjects will share with us our sense of responsibility and our pride in possession." This eloquent hope is raised high above the bickerings of party or the foolish outcry of envious adversaries, and the enthusiastic welcome which England gave to Mr Chamberlain proves that his hope is shared by his countrymen. But the work is only just begun, and we look to Mr Chamberlain not only to complete it, but to restore to his bewildered colleagues their own confidence and the confidence of the nation.

Non omnia possumus omnes; and if the triumphant return of Mr Chamberlain from the peaceful conquest of Africa reminds us that Great Britain has a sound instinct for politics, our neighbours in Europe find a compensation in other and less hazardous pursuits. France, for instance, if she be still experimenting in statecraft, enjoys an imaginative life of which few Englishmen are conscious. In Paris, as in

the provinces, you may see all the world taking as keen a delight in their own and each other's lives as the people of the East. They are, in fact, the true gossips of Europe. There they sit, the free enlightened citizens of France, sipping their *absinthe* upon the *terrace* of a café, and seeing in all around them the material of a pleasant comedy. To their quick eyes the men and women of next door seem less the slaves of a hard livelihood than the personages of a romance set in the atmosphere which best befits them. And as in life, so it is in literature. French literature, like French life, is not compelled to run in a groove. It is free to treat whatever material it choose, and its masters long ago discovered that Romance is not mummified in the trappings of the past, but is a breathing image, which knocks at our door, if only we will let her in. At the very moment when the *romantiques* had captured Paris, Théophile Gautier, in an apologue called 'Celle-ci et Celle-là,' applauded the art of everyday. Poesy, he declared, the daughter of the gods, found nothing so humble that she should disdain it. "She is not loth," said he, "to leave the blue sky of the East, to flutter her golden wings along her back, and to sit at the head of a truckle-bed in a wretched garret." The ill-furnished room of the enthusiast who counted but twenty years was in Gautier's eyes as poetical as Baise, as

Ischia, as Lago Maggiore itself. So he counsels the young Rodolphe to throw his Spanish or Italian illuminations into the fire, not to transplant himself from his native soil, but to remember that he is a Parisian and a good fellow, which is far better than masquerading as a poor devil of a bandit.

This advice is strange in the mouth of the young hero who led the assault on the first night of "Hernani," and who did not scruple to illuminate his own person with the most brilliant colours. But it is very sound, and it comes back to our memory as we contemplate the 'Century of French Romance' which has just been published.¹ For it is certain that the great novelists of France have followed the good counsel of Théophile Gautier. They have recognised the romantic superiority of their own room, though it be a garret, and they have left us a history of modern France, whose truth no documents shall ever upset. Some, of course, like Dumas and Hugo, have sought inspiration in the past; some, like Stendhal and Merimée, have wandered far from their native land. But when all deductions are made, the novelists of France present us with such a record of social life and changing manners as no other literature can afford; they have done yet more than this: they have reinvented their own country, so that you can-

not visit Rouen without thinking of Flaubert, and Balzac speaks to you eloquently in every corner of Paris.

We therefore welcome any series of books which recalls the romance of a romantic people, and to those who have no French we may confidently commend these twelve volumes. The translation is efficiently performed, several of the Introductions are wisely appreciative, and if the publisher had taken the advice which Gautier gave to Rodolphe—"throw your illuminations into the fire"—the books would have been all the better to look at. At the same time, we cannot approve Mr Gosse's selection. Not only is more than one novelist admitted who has no right to a place among the first twelve of France, but the work chosen does not always most faithfully represent its author. We know not what Dumas the younger, with that preposterous piece of sentimentalism, 'La Dame aux Camélias,' is doing in this galley. We could easily dispense with M. Octave Feuillet, nor do we think that the two short stories of Prosper Merimée are worthy to take their place by the side of Balzac and Flaubert. Again, Maupassant was above all the master of the short story. His novels are characteristic of him neither in picture nor in sentiment; unable to keep up his own interest for three hundred

¹ A Century of French Romance. Edited by Edmund Gosse. With Introductions by Various Hands. 12 volumes. London: Heinemann.

pages, he can hardly expect to hold ours; and justice could only have been done him by the wise selection of half-a-dozen stories. However, it is idle to expect agreement in so delicate a matter as selection. We must take what we are given and make the best of it.

At the head of them all stands Balzac, the greatest of the moderns, the Atlas who held all France upon his tireless shoulders,—the literary athlete who faced a superhuman task with an assurance which Mr Henry James, in a luminous essay, very properly describes as “swagger.” Swagger, to be sure, it was; swagger, too, abundantly justified by the event. But “bounder,” another word used by Mr James, is shocking to our respect, and we wish it had not been printed upon the same page with the name of Balzac. Now, Balzac’s project was to paint the whole life of France in the colours of reality, and he succeeded supremely well. Yet he was so little a realist that he invented even his own debts. The gigantic task which he set himself left him little time wherein to gather what is commonly known as “experience,” and he would have been as false to nature as is Georges Ohnet himself, had he not been gifted, as Shakespeare was gifted, with the power of divination. But once he had invented his characters, and set them in a certain *milieu*, he knew inevitably what they would do and say. Indeed it is from this power of divination

that his so-called realism proceeds. The catalogues of furniture, the conscientious descriptions of works of art wherewith his works are padded, merely detract from the effect of reality. In other words, his truth was a truth not of trappings but of character. He created many worlds—Paris, the provinces, the *salons*, the workshops, the theatres, and he understood them all. He was familiar with all classes—nobles, politicians, artists, misers, actresses, thieves—because he had drawn the portrait of every one of them. But in reading his works you feel that the knowledge came from within. This, you say to yourself, is not the fruit of observation. Not even Balzac himself could have lived so many lives, have died so many deaths, and then composed his own romantic history. No; if Balzac were a realist, then he was a realist without experience,—a realist who found the truth in his own heart, and who pretended to have seen that which he invented, for the same reason that he fled before the pursuit of imaginary creditors.

It follows, then, that Balzac’s reality is nothing but romance, that Rastignac, Lucien de Rubempré, Vautrin, the Hulots and Marneffes, the Nucigens and the Gobsecks, and all the personages who play a part in his vast drama, are as remote from fact as the Musqueteers of Dumas or the fantastic heroes of Victor Hugo. But if not one of them had an actual existence, if their careers are

not supported by a single document, they are true both to their age and country. For what Dumas and Hugo did for the France of an earlier date, Balzac did for the France of his own time. He was a sincere, and (in the main) an accurate historian. He neglected no corner of French life, though in painting it he omitted most that was unessential. The result is that no better guide-book for modern France can be found than the 'Comédie Humaine.' Nor was Balzac unconscious of his own achievement. He was not merely a writer, struggling for a phrase, though struggle he did, and to some purpose. He boldly laid claim to the title of historian, and on this ground claimed a place among the greatest ones of the earth. "The first half of the nineteenth century," said he in 1844, "will be found to have been profoundly influenced by four men — Napoleon, Cuvier, O'Connell, and myself. The first lived upon the blood of Europe, the second espoused the globe, the third became the incarnation of a race, while I shall have carried a whole society in my brain." It is a proud boast, which time has justified.

A century of fiction, then, which puts Honoré de Balzac at its head, with his grandiose aspiration, and his magnificent achievement, cannot but be distinguished. But Balzac is not alone. Even he finds companions worthy of himself. Is there not the old Dumas, careless of schools and titles, resolute

only to amuse himself and his readers, whom you live with rather than read, whose high spirits and sense of the open air silence the voice of criticism? Is there not Hugo, "a great poet," as Mr Lang says, "and only a considerable novelist," who, despite his absurdities and extravagances, has discovered to your gaze a wild world, peopled by men less or greater than life-size, and governed by forces that are superhuman? But neither Dumas nor Hugo are historians of their time and country. The garret of Rodolphe is not in their eyes synonymous with poetry. No wine-coloured sea nor southern sky was too romantic for their temperament. Neither Baïa nor Ischia could daunt their muse, and had Gautier set his two goddesses — "Celle-ci et Celle-là" — before them, there is no doubt to which of the two they would have given the apple.

But they founded no school; they left no disciples; and it is from Balzac that the modern French Romance descends. Flaubert did but graft the theory of Art for Art's sake upon the doctrine of Balzac. He was a realist, who observed as narrowly as Balzac pretended he observed, and at the same time poured out upon realism the flood of his rage and his scorn. But he was not content to observe; he destroyed his artistic peace with a thousand scruples of style and thought. His biography is the record of a bitter struggle with the French tongue, *cette chienn*

de langue, as Daudet called it. His mother once told him that "the love of phrases had dried up his heart." It dried up much of his work as well. His conscience would not let him write as he would. "You only succeed in producing an effect by the negation of exuberance," said he; "and exuberance is precisely what charms me." But he put the charmer away, as resolutely as St Anthony dismissed temptation, and by a sort of irony his masterpiece, 'Madame Bovary,' though it be not exuberant, cannot escape the charge of irrelevancy.

Yet set 'Madame Bovary' by the side of the best fiction that modern England can show, and you will realise its splendid craftsmanship, its profound sincerity. The worst is that Flaubert, like so many of his countrymen, was the victim of a theory. Balzac, by classing himself with Cuvier, and Zola, by declaring himself a disciple of Claude Bernard, have claimed a place in science as in art, and the most of French novelists have not been content to write their novels; they have aspired to be philosophers as well. They would be realists, or naturalists, or sensitivists, or heaven knows what; yet for all their theories they end by being novelists, like the ordinary Englishman, and in appreciating the comedy of life they surpass us all. But as Oxford is the home of lost causes, so Paris is the home of lost schools. That which to-day is cherished as a gospel is

flouted to-morrow as a heresy. Balzac believed himself to be a realist, and he may be regarded in a vague sense as the founder of the realistic school. Yet realism is but a word, for the quality which it denotes is either universal or impossible. The literary art, like every other art, aims at expressing truth in a certain medium; and since all writing is a matter of convention, reality is plainly beyond the reach of man. The most expert of them all can, indeed, do no more than translate reality into the terms of an accepted artifice. Herodotus, for instance, by one broad sweep produced an effect of reality far beyond the reach of Zola, whose trick it was to wrinkle the surface of life with a thousand irrelevant touches.

In England we do not argue about these things. Our novelists go on their way all untroubled by introspective analysis. But the Frenchman, ever since Balzac, has liked to wave a flag, and to fight not merely for victory but for a method. Balzac, indeed, had not long been dead when realism seemed quite inadequate to the needs of fiction. Flaubert found his comfort in the phrase, and Zola was content with nothing less than the document. Balzac had created a "real" world by the mere force of imagination; Zola was determined to suppress his fancy, and to construct the society of his Rougons and his Macquarts from painfully collected facts. Balzac

thought, and a noble edifice rose magnificently to the sky. Zola laid brick upon brick until a stout wall, nicely constructed and buttressed by documents, faced his readers. It was obvious, therefore, that Zola, having found what he believed to be a new method, should look about for a new name. So he called himself a "naturalist," and candidly believed that he was a real innovator. But he was only attempting to solve the same problem which has engrossed the man of letters since the beginning of time, to express the facts of life in the terms of language. Doubtless he sought "truth" with more than common energy; but no man ever purposely pursued falsehood, and Zola was so intent upon the collection of facts that he forgot that their juxtaposition too often robbed them of reality.

Midway between Balzac and Zola come the De Goncourts, the legitimate heirs of the 'Comédie Humaine,' two god-fathers, among many, of modern Naturalism. Now, the brothers De Goncourt aimed at nothing less than the invention of a new literature, expressed in a new style. They would put upon paper nothing more and nothing less than *la vérité vraie*. They believed that Dumas and Balzac had brought discredit upon imagination, and they determined that they would write nothing down that had not been faithfully observed. Moreover, that they might mark the reaction against the novel of

adventure, they decided that a state of soul was far more interesting than dramatic movement, and they boasted, almost pathetically, that they were the "John the Baptist of modern nervosity"! It is a title which few would care to claim, and we cheerfully leave them to the enjoyment of it. However, if you would note the distance which separates the De Goncourts from Balzac, compare 'Charles Demailly' with 'Les Illusions Perdues,' and you cannot resist the conclusion that Balzac has the advantage, not only in romance, but in truth also. The De Goncourts, in fact, were afflicted by an intellectual myopia: they could only see a thing when they were close to it; but even if they approached their eye, they were so intent upon the parts of the object that they missed the significance of the whole. The result was, as Edmond de Goncourt sorrowfully confessed, that the best passages in their books were those which they invented themselves. M. Zola, for instance, was certain that Athanassiadis, the old Greek of 'La Faustin,' was drawn from life, and it was the one personage in the drama who existed only in the author's brain! After this, who shall doubt that realism is an affair, not of process, but of effect?

Nor was realism the sole aim of the brothers De Goncourt. While they set out to observe as narrowly as Zola, they were determined to pursue the right phrase as ardently as Flaubert. The double ambition was super-

human, and beneath its load MM. de Goncourt stumbled into the pit of pedantry. After all, masterpieces are seldom achieved by those who set about the work in the spirit of advertised reaction, and MM. de Goncourt did but establish their practice upon a reversal of the past. When they came upon the town, fine writing had fallen into disrepute. Stendhal, said Balzac, wrote as the birds sing. He did more than this: he deliberately wrote in an easy, impersonal manner. He made no secret of the prejudice which he felt against "an artistic style," and he scorned to obtain an effect which in his eyes was illegitimate. But, as always happens, his practice did not conform to his theory. In spite of himself he now and again fell into the style which he affected to despise, and like the rest he proved that a novelist can be no more than a novelist whatever banner he wave in the eye of the world.

We English are not born logicians, and our novelists are not wont to play off one school against the other. But nevertheless the art of fiction has been practised in Great Britain with a *fine* distinction, and as we contemplate this century of French romance, we cannot help making a comparison. This we do in no spirit of Chauvinism, because we readily recognise that the French have certain qualities — sincerity, courage, style—which our novelists too often lack. Yet we should not despair, if we had to match the twelve masters

here represented from our own literature. We would send our champion, Sir Walter, out to break a lance with Balzac, confident that the battle would be drawn. Dickens and Thackeray might face Daudet and De Goncourt unashamed. And we have a phalanx of women—Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot—who would bear themselves gallantly in the contest. At the top, then, we should not fear defeat. But when we come to the rank and file, our confidence vanishes. Our second-rate novelists could not hold out for a moment against those whom France herself describes as second-rate. It is here, indeed, that the influence of the schools is felt. A formula does but hamper the man of genius, who is a law unto himself. But it keeps the writer of mediocre talent in the strait path, and saves him from wandering in the fantastic byways of ill-digested theology and unknown sciences. However, good fiction is admirable, where'er it be found, and time soon makes an end of mediocrity, whether it be regulated by a formula, or be free to make itself ridiculous without restraint or knowledge.

But if our novelists are careless of the schools and their teaching, the few dramatists that we may boast take themselves with portentous gravity, and hang out their banner as bold as brass or as a French novelist. Here, for instance, is Mr Pinero, who in a recently published lecture condemns

what he is pleased to call the dramas of Robert Louis Stevenson, that he may say a word for the realistic method. Now, in the first place, it is an offence against both accuracy and good manners to speak of dramas which were written in collaboration with Mr Henley as "the dramas of Stevenson." It is true that at the outset Mr Pinero admits the partnership, but he straightway dismisses it from the argument: he seeks comparisons in Mr Stevenson's works; and he justifies a hasty theory by passages from Mr Stevenson's letters. He should know that it is not customary, if we may take a familiar instance, to criticise the plays of Fletcher, as though Beaumont had no hand in them; and we are well assured that if Mr Pinero had collaborated (let us say) with Mr Cecil Raleigh, he would be displeased if their production was described as "the drama of Raleigh." This, however, is, as we have said, a matter of accuracy and good manners, and does not affect the argument, if any, of Mr Pinero's lecture.

But the argument, such as it is, does not tempt us to refutation. It is idle to discuss with a critic who rests his conclusions upon false premisses. Now, Mr Pinero sets out to inquire why the plays of Messrs Henley and Stevenson have made "such little mark"—in other words, why they have never enjoyed a popular success or a long run. This, of course, is wholly irrelevant to their merits as dramas,

and has no interest for us whatever. This, however, does not content him. He presently asserts that Messrs Henley and Stevenson in all their plays "were deliberately imitating outworn models, and doing it in a sportive, half-disdainful spirit, as who should say 'the stage is a realm of absurdities—come, let us be cleverly absurd.'" For this latter assertion there is no sort of warrant; it is, we believe, wholly untrue; while as for the "outworn models," Messrs Henley and Stevenson, being men of letters, naturally respected the tradition of their craft, and would doubtless appear old-fashioned to audiences who delight in what is called "musical comedy." But, still unsatisfied, Mr Pinero declares, as a corollary, that Messrs Henley and Stevenson thought that the art of drama was "easy" of access. Now, Mr Stevenson says nothing of this sort in the passage which Mr Pihero quotes, and until Mr Henley makes confession over his own signature we prefer not to believe it.

It is idle, therefore, to regard with any seriousness an argument thus slenderly established, and we may dismiss as unproven all the charges brought against the dramas of Messrs Henley and Stevenson. But the *obiter dicta* of Mr Pinero are not without their interest, since he states the case of the professional playwright with an ingenuous candour. He declares, with some truth, that there is scarcely a poet or novelist of the nineteenth century that

has not "failed" in his attempt to write for the stage. Even where the poets have succeeded, Mr Pinero hastily puts their triumph down to actors and managers. "Some of Byron's plays were forced, by fine acting and elaborate scenic embellishment, into a sort of success; but how dead they are to-day!" (Are they so dead, we wonder, as the plays of the real Byron, the author of "Our Boys," who, we take it, did not rely for his success upon scenic embellishment?) Nor has Lord Tennyson fared any better. Two of his plays "were so admirably mounted and rendered by that great actor, Sir Henry Irving, that they enjoyed considerable prosperity in the theatre." The prejudice is evident, which assigns all the credit for the success of Byron and Tennyson to actor and stage-manager, and lets us conclude, for instance, that "Dandy Dick" owed nothing to John Clayton and Mrs Wood. But, prejudice apart, it is evident that for Mr Pinero success means the appreciation of the people, and the failure of the poets is not quite so disastrous as he thinks.

In what, then, have they failed? Not in art, for the terms "success" and "prosperity" put that out of the discussion. They have failed to arouse to enthusiasm an after-dinner, idle audience, which detests poetry, and has no ear for fine English. They share their failure with all the great playwrights, who have thrown

the brightest lustre upon our literature. Shakespeare makes a fitful appearance; but the rest, where are they? Suppose a manager were rash enough to choose for representation not one of the austerer masterpieces, but such an enchanting comedy as Heywood's "English Traveller," would it hold the stage a single week against "The Best of Friends," let us say, or "The Country Girl"? Of course it would not; and Mr Pinero must find a cause for the failure of Byron, Tennyson, and the others, which is not quite so flattering to his vanity as the incompetence of the poets.

Is it not possible that the people deliberately prefers folly to wisdom, ugliness to beauty, a common jargon to the exquisite speech of literary craftsmen? If this be so, then failure is distinction and success a comfort to nothing save the pocket. If fools succeed where angels miss a triumph, we may not conclude that the chatter of fools is better than the eloquence of angels. We shall be more prudent to argue that the stage and its supporters think less of eloquence than of folly. Messrs H. A. Jones and Tanner are not better playwrights than Byron and Tennyson—they are merely more popular; and if Mr Pinero's argument were sound, the merits of a drama could best be expressed in a balance-sheet.

However, Mr Pinero does now and again reveal his artistic preferences and dislikes. He has no love of long speeches,

or fine language, or soliloquies. The ancient conventions of the drama offend his delicate taste. Yet we know not why they should. Realism is as remote from the stage as from fiction. So long as you have footlights and flies and back-cloths, the drama will remain and should remain a mere mass of conventions. The Greek drama, which allowed messengers to bring news of heartrending episodes, was no more conventional than the most modern of comedies. And if we are to discuss the merits of the conventions, it would not be difficult to prove the immeasurable superiority of the Greek. Even Mr Pinero himself is bound hand and foot by the conventions both of drama and language. He owes much to Ibsen, and both Ibsen and himself owe more to Scribe. He prefers what has been called the "well-made" play to the beauty of Shakespeare, and though he is obviously entitled to his preference, it is possible that both he and his public err egregiously. Again, he finds the prose of Messrs Henley and Stevenson rhetorical. But is his own prose more natural than the prose of Messrs Henley and Stevenson? Not a bit of it. It is as conventional as theirs, and fashioned not after the language of literature but after the language of the daily press. That is to say, it is loose, inaccurate, and unexpressive; it pays no more attention to grammar than to cadence; and again we say the old convention is better.

The truth is, our dramatists have long since forgotten that the English language is still the medium of the English drama, and that no branch of literary art is worth a word of praise that wantonly divorces itself from literature. The foolish dramatist who was once loquacious concerning what he was pleased to call "the literary drama" condemned his own craft in a single phrase. No doubt, prosperity being essential, the audiences of our theatres must share the blame with their favourites. Too idle to listen to exquisite prose or splendid verse, they prefer the quick antics of comedians, and in their ear, as in Mr Pinero's, "theatrical" has a far more splendid sound than "dramatic." To sum the matter up: that poets have failed upon the stage is no compliment to the professional playwrights, who believe themselves the vessels of an esoteric inspiration. It merely means that literature and the drama travel by different roads, and they will continue to travel by those roads so long as the actor is master of the dramatist, so long as the merits of a drama are judged by the standard of material prosperity. After all, to get your puppets on and off the stage is not the sole end of drama, and modesty might suggest that it is better to fail with Tennyson than to succeed with the gifted author who is at this moment engaged in whitewashing Julia.

Meanwhile Mr Pinero assures us superfluously that the art of drama is not easy. No sane

man ever supposed that it was. "The lyf so short, the craft so long to lerne," wrote Chaucer, and there is no one craft which may be learned and practised "with less mental effort" than another. Indeed, if Mr Pinero should think his own craft more desperately heart-breaking than that of the novelist, let him read the biographies of Balzac and Flaubert, and discover the heavy loads which they carried upon their breaking backs. But nowadays it is the fashion of the stage to regard itself and its achievements all too seriously. Nor is Mr Pinero the only sinner. Not long since we witnessed the tyranny of an irascible manager, who dragooned his pit with police, as though actors were not private venturers, but rather members of some Government service, who must be protected in the discharge of their public duties. And then came that astonishing comedy, in which Messrs Bouchier and H. A. Jones played the principal

parts. Now, these gentlemen are so fully persuaded of their importance that they bade the 'Times' change their dramatic critic. The demand was comic enough, but the method which they took to enforce that demand was farce, not comedy. If Mr Jones fears the criticism of the 'Times,' he can withhold his invitation; but when once an invitation is issued, hospitality and a sense of fun should preserve him from imposing conditions. However, both dramatist and manager emerged from the conflict so badly mauled that we almost have it in our heart to pity them. As for Mr H. A. Jones, he has taken refuge on the Continent, while Mr Bouchier, we are sure, is looking about for fresh infinitives to split. And these episodes prove nothing else than that the stage, resolute to repel the assaults of poet and novelist, is woefully deficient in humour, and perhaps if it attained that, all other things might be added to it.

THE INDIAN MUTINY.¹

THERE are some people who think that the Indian Government would have done well to leave the records of the Mutiny of 1857, which are collected in the three volumes now before us, to lie forgotten on their shelves in the Record Office in Calcutta. A wise ruler, they say, will let bygones be bygones. To awaken the bitter memories of Cawnpore and Delhi is to keep alive the animosities of race which time is laying to sleep. What is to be gained, they may ask, by collecting and publishing these papers in a form which may make them accessible to the public? Those who are, or may be, concerned with the government of India, or with the administration of her armies, will be able to obtain access to the original records. For the public at large, and for the rank and file connected with India, it is better to be ignorant of, or to forget, the details of these sad events.

We do not sympathise with these misgivings. The mass of the records and the form in which they have been published are likely to deter rather than attract the general reader; while it appears to us essential that every man who is to take a part in the civil or military administration of our great dependency should know the truth about the events of that

terrible storm which shook the foundations of our rule in 1857—and should learn the lessons which they teach. The present compilation makes this possible. There is one portion, indeed, of these volumes which would be generally and eagerly read if it were published in a separate and handy form—the introductions, namely, written by Mr G. W. Forrest. These introductions give a clear, connected, and well-written narrative of the events told in the official documents, and are free from the technical details of the military despatches. They are, moreover, distinguished by a temperate and impartial tone. The descriptions of the heroism of our people and of the brave deeds that marked every day and hour of the struggle are full of enthusiasm. At the same time there is no disposition to dwell on the misdeeds of the enemy. So far from a perusal of Mr Forrest's narrative being likely to inflame the mind of an Englishman against the people of India, his history brings home to us, with greater force than any other with which we are acquainted, the splendid behaviour of the loyal natives, their gallantry in battle, their endurance in suffering, and the magnitude of the debt which England owes to them. The heroism of British men and

¹ The Indian Mutiny. Selections from Letters, Despatches, and other State Papers. Edited by George W. Forrest, B.A., C.I.E.

women in 1857 is a heritage of which we may well be proud. We are of their blood. But it is good to remember that without the aid of equally heroic Indians we could not have suppressed the revolt. Before a purely British force could have been assembled in sufficient strength to deal successfully with the enemy, all northern India must have been lost for the time. Look for example at the small army which regained Delhi. On the 6th September 1857, when the siege-train and every man that John Lawrence possibly could send from the Panjáb had arrived, the number of effective rank and file of all arms was 8748. Of these the strength of British troops was 3317. All the rest were Indians from the Panjáb or Gurkhas from Nepál. Nicholson's column which stormed the Cashmere Bastion breach consisted of 550 British and 450 Panjáb infantry. The second column included 350 Sikhs in a total of 850 men. The third column, 950 strong, had only 200 British of the 52nd Regiment. The fourth column consisted of the Sirmour Battalion of Ghurkas, the Guide infantry, a detachment of Dogras, and various detachments from British regiments. In the reserve, 1300 strong, only 250 men of the 61st were British. So at Lucknow. The Residency garrison on the 1st July 1857 was 1618 strong. Of this number, at least half were natives of India, and, more than that, they were men of regiments that had mutinied, whose com-

rades were fighting in the ranks of the besiegers.

"With respect to the Native troops," wrote Brigadier John Inglis (who, it will be remembered, was Colonel of H.M.'s 32nd Regiment, and cannot be suspected of any tendency to make much of the Sepoy), "I am of opinion that their loyalty has never been surpassed. They were indifferently fed and worse housed. They were exposed—especially the 13th Regiment under the gallant Lieutenant Aitken—to a most galling fire of round-shot and musketry, which materially decreased their numbers. They were so near the enemy that conversation could be carried on between them, and every effort, persuasion, promise, and threat was alternately resorted to, in vain, to seduce them from their allegiance to the handful of Europeans who in all probability would have been sacrificed by their desertion."

It is as certain as anything can be in this world that, unassisted by the Indians in the garrison, the 800 Europeans could not have manned or held the defences of the Residency for a week. What, moreover, could they have done without the camp-followers and the domestic servants, many of whom stood by their masters? What must our troops have suffered throughout the Mutiny campaign without the bearers for the sick and wounded, or the gallant water-carriers who slaked the thirst of the fighting ranks in the thick of the fire? How many of these men perished in our service from wounds and sickness, and in what despatch are their names recorded? It is as well to give a foremost place to these considerations, before we read of deeds of treachery and blood which, even after the lapse of

wellnigh half a century, make the heart sick. Mr Forrest's narrative gives a prominent place to the part taken by our Indian soldiers and allies in the contest. Nor, while he tells with patriotic pride of the gallant deeds done by British officers and men, does he fail to put on record the exploits and the heroism of Indian officers and soldiers. It is characteristic of the spirit of his narrative that a brave and noble act, by whomsoever done, whether by officer or man, by Britisher or Indian, is given an equal place.

As to the origin of the great Mutiny, we cannot find that any new light is shed on it by the records now collected and published. A subject on which so much has been written, so many memoirs published, such searching inquiries made, was hardly susceptible of further illustration. The immediate cause of the explosion was the greased cartridge. It is certain that the mind of the Sepoy was possessed of the idea that the British Government was foully plotting to rob him of his caste. In this delusion he was encouraged probably by persons of better knowledge and education who were hostile to British rule.

To the European the awful doom involved in the loss of caste is hardly intelligible.

"To the Brahmin sepoy it meant becoming an outcast, an object of loathing and disgust. It brought shame and misery upon his wife and children; it deprived him of the consolation of his religion; and it entailed upon him, instead of an eternity of happiness, an eternity of woe" (vol. i. p. 3).

Under such a terror the high-caste Indian becomes like a panic-stricken animal in a prairie fire. No reasoning, no persuasion, no assurances, however solemn or by whomsoever given, will stay him in his flight from destruction, and the uneducated Mohammedan of India is hardly less dominated by a dread of pollution. The records now before us make it but too certain that the men had ample cause to distrust the assurances given to them, in good faith, as we know, by their British officers. The sneer of the low-caste magazine workman to the Brahmin sepoy who refused him water, "You will soon lose your caste when you have to bite cartridges covered with the fat of pigs and cows," had more truth in it than we like to think. The evidence of the inspector-general and of the commissary of ordnance, who were responsible for the manufacture of the cartridges, was taken at the court-martial held on 21st March 1857 for the trial of Salich Singh, jemadar, and is to be found at pp. lv. *et seq.* of the first volume of Records. Neither of those officers could say what kind of tallow had been used in preparing the cartridges. "No inquiry is made as to the fat of what animal is used." "The tallow is that which the contractor supplied." "The tallow might or might not have contained the fat of cows or other animals." Thus, by the criminal negligence or ignorance of a few officers and the jeer of

a pariah, a fire was lighted which spread from Calcutta to Peshawur, and cost the lives of thousands of our own people and of the natives of India. The material, inflammable as grass dried in the wind of an Indian June, was at hand in abundance. Slackness and insouciance had taken hold of the administration of the Indian Army, if not of the Government in all branches. We had come to regard ourselves as the destined rulers of the country, tolerated or even beloved by the people, and to think that nothing could shake our god-given dominion.

"The army," wrote Sir John Lawrence, on the 16th December 1857, "had for a long time been in an unsatisfactory state. It had long seen and felt its power. We had gone on year by year adding to its numbers without adding to our European force. Our contingents (*i.e.*, the native States' contingents) which, under better arrangements, might, like the Punjab, have acted as a counterpoise, were really part of the army. All the men were 'Poorbeas.' The Bengal army was one great brotherhood, in which all the members felt and acted in union. Our treasuries, arsenals, forts, were all guarded by them. As one letter I intercepted said, it was a *sáf mydán* (a clear level) from Delhi to Calcutta; and as a Hindustání observed to a Sikh friend of mine, 'the proportion of European soldiers to Hindustánís was about equal to the salt a man consumed in his chupattie'" (Bosworth Smith's 'Life of Lord Lawrence,' vol. ii. pp. 288, 289).

Nor can it be denied that much in the civil administration of the country had rendered a portion of the population ready to favour a revolt, if not to take an active part in it. The annexation of

Oudh, the manner in which the talukdars and the larger landowners had been treated in that and in some of our older provinces, the policy adopted towards the native States, the progressive attitude of the Government in the matter of widow-marriage and other questions, had all tended to add to the number of those who wished ill to the British rule. It may be doubted whether there was any elaborate plot for a simultaneous rising. Throughout the army in all probability an understanding existed as to the course to be followed under certain circumstances. Communications may have passed between the moving spirits of the mutineers on one side and the great leaders of the civil population, and prominent personages, such as the Nana and the ex-King of Delhi, on the other. Of any formal or thought-out conspiracy there is no proof, and indications to the contrary are not altogether wanting. The Cawnpore mutineers, for example, had started for Delhi instead of making common cause with the Nana of Bithor, and the Nana had to follow them up to persuade them to return. The one cause which more than anything else gave the revolt a rallying-point and consolidated the mutineers was one of our own making. If we had not maintained a puppet emperor at Delhi, there would have been nothing to unite and hold them together. They would in all likelihood have dispersed every man to his own home. In the minds

of the people generally, prior to 1857, the old emperor in the great palace on the Jumna was still the nominal ruler of India, and the Company in the position of the minister acting in his name.

And so, when the outbreak at Barrackpore had been followed by the mutiny at Meerut, the cry was raised, "To Delhi! to Delhi!" The narrative of Mr Forrest does not spare the incompetency of the general in command at Meerut, whether in the course he pursued in dealing with the 3rd Cavalry or in his failure to follow up the mutineers to Delhi. There were in Meerut the 6th Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers), H.M.'s 60th Rifles, 800 strong, a troop of Horse Artillery, a light field battery, and 200 artillery recruits. The native troops who had risen and taken the road to Delhi were the 3rd Light Cavalry and two infantry regiments. It is true that half the Carabiniers were said to be unable to ride and to have no horses; it is true that a large number of women and children and much stores and property had to be protected. Even so, had a man like Nicholson or Hodson been in command, he would have realised the meaning of the route taken by the mutineers, and would have risked everything on the pursuit.

The arrival of the Meerut regiments at Delhi led to the rising of the Delhi garrison, and the massacre of nearly every white or Christian in the place, and the assumption by the king, willingly or unwillingly,

of the leadership of the revolt. The outbreak at Delhi took the British officers and residents by surprise. There were no British troops in the cantonment. Defence was impossible, and the story is a melancholy tale of treacherous slaughter, which it would be well to pass over. There is, however, one glorious episode which never can be forgotten. The defence and destruction of the magazine by Lieutenant Willoughby and his eight comrades of the Bengal Artillery will always live in the memory of Englishmen:—

"Willoughby, seeing that it was past hope, gave the signal, and Scully lighted the train. A crash of thunder followed, and the exulting assailants were dashed to pieces. . . . Four of the heroic nine, wounded, shattered, and bruised, made good their retreat from the ruins. And the three hundred Spartans, who in the summer morning sat 'combing their long hair for death' in the passes of Thermopylæ, have not earned a more lofty estimate for themselves than those nine modern Englishmen."

Mr Forrest gives us a graphic narrative of the siege. He describes how the little force was painfully collected by General Anson, who joined it only to die. How he was succeeded by General Barnard, who held the ridge with gallant tenacity until death took him also; how General Reed next took command until sickness drove him away; how, finally, to Reed succeeded General A. Wilson, who brought the great siege to a glorious close. Even by those who have familiarised themselves with the events of that time, Mr Forrest's vigorous tale will be read with

interest. It is not unfair to the several officers who commanded at Delhi to say that the eye dwells less on them than on the extraordinary pluck and endurance of the men, and on the skill and vigour of less exalted officers, who were the life of the force which held the Delhi ridge against an enemy vastly superior in numbers, and fought more than thirty "well-contested combats." For more than twelve weeks of the worst part of an Indian year they fought night and day:—

"Neither heat nor pain nor pestilence destroyed their courage or crushed their spirits. In the men's tents they made merry, and, like the Greeks before Troy, they had their sports. Stricken to death, the soldier told his officer he would soon be up again and be ready for a brush with the mutineers. These warriors, worn with disease, worn with constant duty under a burning sun, reduced in numbers, stormed in the face of day a strong fortress defended by 30,000 desperate men provided with everything necessary to defy assault. The list of killed and wounded bears testimony to the intrepidity displayed by all arms of the service. The effective force at Delhi never amounted to 10,000 men, and 992 were killed and 2845 wounded: many more died from disease and exposure."

In one of the many interesting notes which add value to his narrative, Mr Forrest gives a table contributed by Lord Roberts, comparing the casualties in the Crimea and Delhi. In round numbers the loss at Delhi was double that in the Crimea, in proportion to the strength of the two armies during the respective sieges. The strength at Delhi on the 11th September was 7794.

Between that date and the 20th, 1674, or 21·5 per cent, were killed or wounded.

"In the name of outraged humanity [wrote Lord Canning], in memory of innocent blood ruthlessly shed, and in acknowledgment of the first signal vengeance inflicted upon the foulest treason, the Governor-General records his gratitude to Major-General Wilson and the brave army of Delhi."

But there were many, alas! and those of the bravest and best, who were not there to hear these thanks, and amongst them was John Nicholson.

"Of all the heroes who have made the Indian Mutiny an epic, none strike the imagination like John Nicholson. He was a knight belonging to the time of King Arthur rather than to the present century. He was shot down leading the assaulting column in the hour of victory, and was buried not far from the breach near the Cashmere gate through which he led his men. The body was brought from his tent on a gun-carriage. But 'no roar of cannon,' says one who was there, 'announced the departure of the procession from camp; no volleys of musketry disturbed the silence which prevailed at his grave; no martial music was heard. Thus without pomp or show we buried him.'"

He died, as he had lived, in his country's service; and his last but not his least gift to her was his glorious name, and the imperishable heritage of a great example.

It may assist the reader in understanding the situation if the leading dates are now placed before him. From the 27th January 1857 until the 6th May of that year the interest centred at Barrackpore and Berham-pore, the former 16 miles, and the latter somewhat more than 100 miles, from the British

attacks were of almost nightly occurrence. The whole of the officers and men have been on duty night and day during the eighty-seven days which the siege had lasted up to the arrival of Sir J. Outram. In addition to this military duty the force has been nightly employed in repairing defences, in moving guns, in burying dead animals, in conveying ammunition and commissariat stores from one place to another, and in other fatigue duties too numerous and too trivial to enumerate here. I feel, however, that any words of mine will fail to convey any adequate idea of what our fatigue and labours have been,—labours in which all ranks and all classes, civilians, officers, and soldiers, have borne an equally noble part."

And then, after alluding to the almost universal sickness which decimated the garrison and killed scores of the women and children, he adds:—

"I cannot refrain from bringing to the prominent notice of his Lordship in Council the patient endurance and the Christian resignation which have been evinced by the women of this garrison. They have animated us by their example. Many, alas! have been made widows and their children fatherless in this cruel struggle. But all such seem resigned to the will of Providence, and many, among whom may be mentioned the honoured names of Bird, of Polehampton, of Barbor, and of Gall, have, after the example of Miss Nightingale, constituted themselves the tender and solicitous nurses of the wounded and dying soldiers in the hospital."

Among the many heroes of the Lucknow Residency Henry Lawrence, although he only survived the first few days of the siege, will always hold a chief place. His life was so noble, his character so attractive, and his end so tragic, that his grave in the Residency grounds will always be a place

of pilgrimage : the English race. He was responsible for the choice of the Residency as the position to be held. It was his forethought that prepared it and stored it with ammunition and provisions. It was pre-eminently his policy which secured to the garrison so many native soldiers and pensioners, without whose aid the English must have succumbed from sheer exhaustion. Mr Forrest does full justice to his character and services, and we venture to think in his account of Delhi he has given less than his right to John Lawrence, whose services were no less signal, although he may not have been so lovable as his brother Henry. Of the many gallant men who took part in the defence space forbids us even to enumerate the *deeds*, much less their deeds. They are all recorded in Mr Forrest's narrative, and any one who cares to read of heroism in the breach and in the mine and in the sortie will find them there told in the terse nervous language which befits them, so different from the word-painting of the modern journalist. Nor was the bravery all on one side.

"At Anderson's post a few rebels with a mighty effort pushed through the stockade and reached the mound in front of the ditch. No sooner were they seen than they were assailed by a tremendous fire which laid them low. Yet others succeeded those who fell. A Moslem fanatic with the green standard of the Prophet led the ranks and animated the courage of his followers by religious appeals. He fell riddled by bullets. A comrade seized him by the belt and threw himself with the body of the wounded standard-bearer over the stockade. The rebel

trained men, and fortified with considerable strength, being invested and reduced by a very inferior force, the Residency of Lucknow affords an equally glorious instance of the successful resistance of a small band of men, hampered with a large number of women and children, defending a weak position against a multitude of assailants furnished with heavy artillery. It is hard to say which picture fills the mind of an Englishman with greater pride. Every gallant deed done at Delhi can be matched by one done at Lucknow. There was nothing done at Lucknow which is not equalled by the feats of arms performed at Delhi.

The lot of our small force shut up in the Residency enclosure at Lucknow was in some respects more hard than that of the troops before Delhi. Confined in a small space, with inadequate accommodation and shelter insufficient to protect them from the weather, to say nothing of the fire of the enemy, with bad and insufficient food, cut off from communication with the outer world, and often with hearts sick with hope deferred, Sir John Inglis and his handful of men fought night and day for nearly four months. When at length they were relieved by Havelock, and looked eagerly for release, it was only to find that they had to resume the fight—with the help, it is true, of their new comrades, but with no alleviation of their hardships, and little more hope of ultimate salvation.

What those hardships were may be gathered from what Outram wrote of the sufferings of the force under his command "since we entered Lucknow":—

"Themselves placed in a state of siege—suddenly reduced to scanty and unsavoury rations—denied all the little luxuries (such as tea, sugar, rum, and tobacco) which by constant use had become to them almost necessities of life. Smitten in many cases by the same scorbutive affections and other evidences of debility which prevailed among the original garrison—compelled to engage in laborious operations—exposed to constant danger, and kept ever on the alert,—their spirits and cheerfulness and zeal and discipline seemed to rise with the occasion. Never could have been a force more free from grumbles, more cheerful, more willing, or more earnest."

But what of the noble little band of soldiers of both races, of civilians of all classes, and of tenderly nurtured ladies and children, who were shut up inside the Residency trenches for eighty-seven days before Havelock and Outram arrived, and for nearly two months afterwards?

"Few troops," Sir John Inglis declared in his well-known despatch, "have ever undergone greater hardships, exposed as they have been to a never-ceasing musketry fire and cannonade. They have also experienced the ultimate vicissitudes of extreme wet and intense heat, and that too with very insufficient shelter from either, and in many places without shelter at all. In addition to having had to repel real attacks, they have been exposed night and day to the hardly less harassing false alarms which the enemy has been constantly raising. . . . All therefore had to stand to their arms and to remain at their posts until the demonstration had ceased; and such

General Sir James Outram to command the combined divisions of Dinapore and Cawnpore. It was too tragic. Without explanation or warning, this order must have been a bitter disappointment to the gallant veteran. Lord Canning and his advisers have been severely criticised for the "supersession" of Havelock. Mr Forrest has, we think, shown that no supersession was intended. Havelock was supposed to be on his way to Lucknow, and was in command of a field force for the relief of that place. Any soreness, however, which Havelock felt, must have been removed by Outram's telegram, which reached him some few days afterwards: "I shall join you with the reinforcements, but to you shall be left the glory of relieving Lucknow, for which you have so nobly struggled. I shall accompany you only in my civil capacity as commissioner, placing my military services at your disposal, should you please to make use of them, serving under you as a Volunteer."

And so it happened that to Havelock was reserved the glory of relieving Lucknow; and to Outram came the even greater and more enduring fame of a noble act of renunciation.

And "the confidence of Major-General Sir James Outram in Brigadier-General Havelock" was indeed well justified, as Sir Colin Campbell said in his order confirming Outram's self-effacement. "The energy, perseverance, and constancy of the Brigadier-General have never relaxed throughout a long

series of arduous operations, in spite of scanty means, a numerous and trained enemy, and sickness in his camp. Never have troops shown greater or more enduring courage than those under the orders of Brigadier-General Havelock."

It was reserved, however, for those troops under their beloved leader to show even still greater gallantry and tenacity. It is impossible within our limits to follow Mr Forrest in his narrative of the fighting of Havelock's force in cutting their way to the Residency through the tangled and fortified lanes of Lucknow. Night had fallen on the 25th September when, "through the abandoned Clock Tower, the column marched straight to the Bailey Guard Gate. Faint with heat and excessive toil, and many staggering under wounds, the soldiers threw themselves on the ground to rest while a portion of the barricade was being torn aside — 'the moon rising calm and bright above us, and looking down coldly on our entry when at length all obstacles were removed.'" And here occurred one of those sad accidents of war which we must narrate, as it shows the spirit which animated the Indian sepoy "faithful to his salt." As the column was advancing Lieutenant Aitken of the 13th Native Infantry (who held the Bailey Gate Guard throughout the siege) "heard the shouts of our men, and sallied forth with a party of his men to meet them. At the battery they met. The

soldiers in the excitement of the moment unfortunately mistook the sepoys for rebels, and bayoneted three of them. 'It is all for the cause,' said a heroic sepoy to his comrades as his life-blood flowed away." Many noble soldiers fell that day,—amongst them, the bravest of the brave, the impetuous and masterful Neill. "And here," wrote a soldier of the 78th Highlanders to his brother,—"and here, when success had crowned our efforts, shocking to relate, our brave general Neill fell. He was an honour to his country, and the idol of the British army." No leader can desire a grander epitaph.

"Rarely has a commander," wrote Lord Canning, "been so fortunate as to relieve by his success so many aching hearts, or to reap so rich a reward of gratitude as will deservedly be offered to Brigadier-General Havelock and his gallant band wherever their triumph shall become known." And we can add with Mr Forrest, "The story of their triumph is well known wherever our English is spoken, and the more its history be examined the more will it be seen to be one of the most sublime episodes in our national history. The nature of the British soldier was then seen at its very best."

But to Havelock's force it was not given to lead out the beleaguered garrison in triumph, or to disperse the savage enemy who surrounded them. It was, indeed, the urgent desire of the Government that the garrison should be relieved. There were 470

women and children who were suffering terribly, and whose retention within the Residency meant many deaths. There were also numerous sick and wounded. To guard a convoy of not less than 1500 helpless persons through miles of city and suburb swarming with the enemy was impossible without a much larger force than General Outram had at his disposal. He therefore wisely resolved to remain in the Residency, to extend his defences somewhat, and to await reinforcements, which, as Delhi had fallen, he hoped might soon be sent to his aid.

A new actor now comes upon the scene. Sir Colin Campbell had taken over the chief command in India on the 17th of August. He had devoted himself to pushing on preparations for taking the field, and sending up reinforcements. A skilful soldier and strategist, careful in design, bold in execution, he would not allow himself to be hurried. He found everything necessary to prepare and fit a force for the field in a starved state, and it was not until the 27th October that he was able to leave Calcutta. On the 3rd November he reached Cawnpore, and after arranging, as well as might be, for the safety of that place, which was threatened by a powerful force of the Gwalior mutineers and others, by leaving General Windham with 500 British and 550 Madras infantry and gunners, he left on the 9th and joined his camp, more than half-way to Lucknow. There he was met by the

gallant Kavanagh, then only an office clerk, who, disguised as a native, had made his way from the Residency through the enemy's lines. He brought despatches and plans which enabled the Commander-in-Chief to decide on the course to follow. Mr Forrest gives us a notable picture of Colin Campbell reviewing his troops on the 11th November, before he made his final move. He had a great task before him.

"With a force of 4500 men of all arms he had to rescue Outram from the grasp of 60,000 trained soldiers occupying strong positions. He had to carry and hold these positions until he reached the post held by Outram's force. He had to do it, on account of the want of provisions, within a limited period. . . . He had to bring away the sick and wounded, women and children, evacuate the Residency, and withdraw his troops first to the Martinière and Dilkosha and then to the Alumbagh. He had then to leave here a small body of men to threaten the enemy, and then proceed with all haste to Cawnpore to save Windham and his garrison. The chances were against him, the risk was immense. But the risk had to be run to save women and children, to rescue an empire."

Most Englishmen and all Scotsmen, we hope, know how the gallant old Highlander did all this and more also. Those who wish to revive their memory of a grand story should read Mr Forrest's narrative. The relief of the Residency by Sir Colin Campbell is an example of skilful leading and heroic courage with which every soldier should make himself familiar. The storming of the Secunderbagh, where a just fate overtook 2000 of the mutinous sepoys, well deserved Sir Colin

Campbell's praise, "There never was a bolder feat of arms." British and Sikhs raced to be first into the breach. Lieutenant Cooper of the 93rd, Lieutenant Burroughs and Colonel Grant of the same regiment, Captain Lumsden of the 30th Bengal Infantry, Corporal Robert Fraser, Lance-Corporal Dunlay, and Private William Nairn, all of the 93rd, were amongst the first to scramble through it. We must find space to record the heroic action of Mukarrab Khan, a Mohammedan sepoy in the 4th Panjáb Infantry, who, when the enemy fled through a gateway, and the heavy doors were on the point of being closed, "pushed his left arm, on which he carried a shield, between them, thus preventing them being shut: on his hand being badly wounded by a sword-cut he drew it out, instantly thrusting in the other arm, when the right hand was all but severed from the wrist." "This devoted action of Mukarrab Khan," writes Lord Roberts, "I myself witnessed."

But we must not linger over these glorious incidents, to which no one but Homer himself could do justice. Every one knows how, after fighting step by step, the Moti Mahal was reached, about 450 yards from the garrison's outposts; how Outram and Havelock with their staffs went forth under a heavy fire to greet the Commander-in-Chief; and how on the sward sloping down from the mess-house stood Colin Campbell, and a blaze of shot and musketry from the enemy in the Kaiser-

bagh rose upon them as the three veterans met. "This was a very happy meeting," wrote Hope Grant, "and a cordial shaking of hands took place." In the words of the Commander-in-Chief, "the relief of the besieged garrison had been accomplished." The hand of death was even then upon Havelock. When he was told that he had been knighted on the 26th September, in the words of Sir Henry Norman, "he lighted up a little." But his work in this life was done.

There was still much fighting to be done, the enemy to be driven back and restrained, while preparations were made for removing the garrison—for Sir Colin had resolved to withdraw altogether from Lucknow for the time. He had told Outram of his intention a week before, and his losses in effecting the relief, which amounted to at least an eighth of his force, went to confirm his decision. Hope Grant and others differed from him, but his mind was made up. No one now doubts that his decision was right. On the 10th November he had written from Cawnpore to Outram:—

"I am here with a very weak force, deficient in all essentials. I have not ammunition for more than three days' firing; but I have come to hand out the wounded, women and children, and garrison, and I have not means to attempt anything more, and I shall be thankful to effect this. I shall blow up the Residency. My communications are threatened from Calpee, where the Gwalior contingent, with forty guns, sixteen of which are heavy, are swelled by remnants of many regiments under Kour Sing to about 10,000 men."

So the order went forth, and all prepared to leave the place which had been their prison and their refuge for so many months. At noon on the 19th they left the entrenchment, women and children, sick and wounded,—some of them in carriages, some in native carts, some in litters carried by Indian bearers, some who could walk on foot. Across the enemy's line of fire, under musketry and grape, they were skilfully piloted across to the Secunderbagh, "where they were welcomed by the old chief." At eleven o'clock that night they were taken to the Dilkusha, a solemn and silent procession, fearing every moment to hear the enemy's guns open on them. About two in the morning they reached the Dilkusha in safety.

Then the garrison had to be brought away; the treasure, the food, and the guns that were not destroyed had to be removed from the Residency without the knowledge of the enemy. With a reluctant step Sir John Inglis was the last to leave, and with his own hand he closed the gate. It was all splendidly done, their commander said when thanking and praising his troops: the movement by which the final rescue of the garrison was effected was "a model of discipline and exactness, the consequence of which was that the enemy was completely deceived, and the force retired by a narrow tortuous lane, the only line of retreat open, and in the face of 50,000 enemies, without molestation."

The joy that must have filled

the hearts of all at this success was to be saddened by the death of Havelock. As we have said, when he and Sir Colin met the hand of death was on him. On the 20th November he had to be carried to the Dilkusha, where a soldier's tent was pitched for him. As the enemy attacked the position next day, he was removed to a safer place. On the 23rd he was laid on a litter outside his tent, where he was tended by his son. On the 24th November he died.

"On Christmas-day," writes Mr Forrest, "news reached England of the Relief of Lucknow, and on January 7th the joy of a nation was turned into mourning by the tidings of Havelock's death.

'Bold Havelock died, I
Tender and Great and Good,
And every man in Britain
Says, "I am of Havelock's blood."'

But Havelock belonged to a race that is not confined to a small island, and wherever our English is spoken the news of his death brought sorrow, and men said, 'I am of Havelock's blood.' Let us never forget that the flags in New York were hung at half-mast high when Havelock died."

We must pass more hurriedly over Sir Colin Campbell's march back to Cawnpore, over the episode of Windham's discomfiture by the force of mutineers from Gwalior and Calpee, and the return of Sir Colin in time to crush the enemy. Windham's management of this affair gave rise at the time to much adverse criticism, and created as much discussion as Buller's operations at Colenso. The account given by Mr Forrest we take to be the most complete yet published.

It is founded on the official documents collated with fresh information obtained from other sources, and especially from the original despatch of Brigadier Carthew, whose part in the affair seems to have been much misunderstood.

But to return to the main subject. After defeating the gathering of the enemy at Cawnpore, the Commander-in-Chief had to consider his plan of operations. At this time the whole of Oudh and Rohilkhund was in the hands of the enemy. Communications between Cawnpore and Delhi on the north, Allahabad on the south, and Agra on the west were by no means secure. The Doab was overrun by bands of rebels, and the civil power was practically non-existent. Sir Colin's first object was to restore communications with Delhi and the Panjáb. Great-hed's column had come down after the taking of Delhi and had passed through the North-Western Provinces, but without making a lasting impression or retaining a grip on the country. Sir Colin determined to "sweep the rebel masses from all sides of the Doab on Fatehgarh," to drive them across the Ganges into Oudh and Rohilkhund, where he hoped to retain them until he could crush them at leisure. By the end of the first week in January 1858 he had completed the first portion of his programme. Communications with Agra and Delhi were restored—the rebels driven across the Ganges into Rohilkhund. It was his desire then to proceed to the conquest of

that province, leaving Oudh to the last.

But there were considerations other than strategical which led Lord Canning to disapprove of this plan of campaign. "So long as Oudh is not dealt with," he wrote, "there will be no real quiet this side of India." And again, in answer to Sir Colin's further arguments: "Paradoxical as it may appear, I think it of more importance to re-establish our power in the centre and capital of Oudh, which has scarcely been in our possession two years, than to recover our older possessions. Every eye is upon Oudh as it was upon Delhi. . . . It represents a dynasty, there is a king of Oudh seeking his own." Sir Colin held to his ground. He argued that Oudh should wait until the autumn of 1858. Lord Canning, however, remained firm. He understood the situation better than the old soldier. The Nana was still in force. He was intriguing with the Mahrattas of Western India. Even at Ava news of Lucknow was anxiously awaited. Hyderabad was uneasy and in sympathy with Oudh. Jung Bahadur was coming down with a Ghurka force from Nepaul to aid us, and it would be very inexpedient to let him think that we were compelled to leave Oudh alone. For these reasons Sir Colin Campbell's opinion was overruled, and an attack on Lucknow decided on. The collection of a sufficient force for the purpose occupied the Commander-in-Chief. Meanwhile, Sir James Outram, with a very inadequate force, was hold-

ing his own gallantly at Alumbagh. Repeatedly attacked by the enemy, he on every occasion repulsed them with heavy loss. His position was hazardous, and he received somewhat scant recognition from the Commander-in-Chief, who did not altogether realise his difficulties. A full account of Outram's operations will be found in Mr Forrest's pages. During February, moreover, Franks and Jung Bahadur were working their way up from the east through Oudh, inflicting severe punishment on the enemy wherever they met them. On the 18th February the order announcing the formation of the army of Oudh was issued. Brushing aside a miserable attempt on the part of the military authorities in England to provide commands for their own favourites at the expense of the safety of India, Sir Colin Campbell chose his leaders with sound judgment. General Archdale Wilson of Delhi fame was to command the artillery; Brigadier Robert Napier the engineer brigade; Hope Grant the cavalry division. The infantry was distributed in three divisions, — the first under Major-General Sir James Outram; the second under Brigadier-General Sir E. Lugard; the third under Brigadier-General Walpole. There was still another delay, caused by the necessity, as a matter of policy, of waiting for Jung Bahadur and General Franks to come up. Together they numbered 12,000 men. But it was not for their assistance so much as out of courtesy to our ally, Jung Bahadur, that it was

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 contains some of them. Their
 children at school in the
 hills amount to thousands.
 The English capital sunk in
 the railways and mills and
 other undertakings is enormous.
 Then look at the vast areas
 we have added to our Empire.
 On the east we have taken in
 Upper Burmah, a country as
 large as France, and we are
 in contact there with a French
 dependency. We have run out
 westward from the Indus to
 the borders of Persia, which is
 in the grip of Russia, and we
 have taken the first step
 towards a railway to Seistan.
 On the north-west we have
 delimited our boundary with
 the Amir, with the result that
 we are practically responsible
 for keeping the peace in an
 immense mountainous region
 inhabited by warlike and tur-
 bulent tribes. We have placed
 a garrison in Chitral in the
 Hindoo Kush, and made our-
 selves responsible for Gilgit on
 the borders of Kashgar. At the
 same time we have added very
 considerably to the native army.
 The Imperial troops, of whom
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 which gave us so much trouble
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 are recruited, or supposed to be
 recruited, from the natives of
 the States which support them,

decided to wait until he could take a share in "the grand operations."

On the 2d of March the advance on the Dilkusha began, and from that date until the 19th there was constant fighting, one stronghold after another being wrested from the enemy. The operations were conducted by Sir Colin with admirable skill, and executed by the troops with indomitable courage and energy. The capture of the Moosa Bagh on the 19th March marked the victorious close of a series of signal operations which had extended over twenty days. The enemy suffered very heavily, especially in the storming of the Kaiser Bagh, where hard fighting took place. We would willingly dwell on several of the most striking incidents: the storming of the Begum Kothi, where the gallant Hodson received his mortal wound; and the magnificent conduct of the Naval Brigade under Peel, who fell severely wounded on the 9th March. But space forbids, and we must refer the reader to Mr Forrest's narrative, which closes with the end of this memorable siege. Fortunately in these operations our loss was small. "A gallant soldier himself, who was at his best in the thick of the battle, Sir Colin Campbell would never sacrifice his army in vain conflict with hopeless obstacles." The casualties amounted to only 16 British officers, 3 native officers, and 108 men killed; 51 British officers and 540 men wounded, and 13 men missing. "That this great success," writes Lord Canning, "should have

been accomplished at so little cost of valuable lives, enhances the honour due to the leader who has achieved it."

The Indian Mutiny was a great time and produced great men, some of whom still live amongst us. Lord Curzon had many happy ideas in the arrangement of the Imperial ceremony which has lately drawn so many visitors to the ridge at Delhi. The happiest of his inspirations was the invitation he gave to the Mutiny veterans of both races, and the place of high honour he assigned to them. And we are told that, among the many displays of grandeur and magnificence, no sight so moved the enthusiasm of the spectators as the procession of the survivors of the heroic men who upheld the honour of the British name in 1857.

Before closing this article we venture to say a few words on the lessons which the events of that year have taught us. No doubt a vast change has come over India since that time. Thousands of miles of railway have been constructed, and there is no part of that vast continent to which reinforcements could not be sent in a few days. Education has spread, and it may be hoped that it would be more difficult now to persuade the people that we had formed deliberate designs upon their religion. A deep feeling of personal loyalty to the King and the royal family has no doubt been created. The army is in a state of better discipline and efficiency. We believe it, indeed, to be

thoroughly workmanlike, and prepared to take the field at a day's notice. The forces sent by India to South Africa and China sufficiently prove the soundness of this confidence. But are we in closer touch with the people? Do we understand them better, have we any more certain knowledge of their feelings and their thoughts, of their reasons for discontent or their aspirations? We are afraid these questions can be answered only in one way. We have no better understanding, no closer contact, no more sure knowledge. We are much more powerful. There is a larger European force. The arsenals and guns are not in the hands of native soldiery. We have command of a great system of telegraphs and railways. But the Mutiny taught us that our power rests on the British rifles. If we increase the number of Indian soldiers, if we extend our frontiers, annex new territories, and are brought into closer contact with other and perhaps hostile Powers, we are not safe unless we increase the European army in a proportionate degree. When irresponsible persons, more conspicuous for a spurious humanity than for knowledge and wisdom, advocate the reduction of our army in India, it is well to remember what befell us in 1857. Our responsibilities and dangers within and without are much greater than they were then. If we have the advantages of some 25,000 miles of railway, we should also have the task of guarding them in case of an

émeute. The number of helpless women and children of our own race and of the mixed race whom we should have to protect is vastly in excess of what it was fifty years ago. Every railway-station of importance contains some of them. Their children at school in the hills amount to thousands. The English capital sunk in the railways and mills and other undertakings is enormous. Then look at the vast areas we have added to our Empire. On the east we have taken in Upper Burmah, a country as large as France, and we are in contact there with a French dependency. We have run out westward from the Indus to the borders of Persia, which is in the grip of Russia, and we have taken the first step towards a railway to Seistan. On the north-west we have delimited our boundary with the Amir, with the result that we are practically responsible for keeping the peace in an immense mountainous region inhabited by warlike and turbulent tribes. We have placed a garrison in Chitral in the Hindoo Kush, and made ourselves responsible for Gilgit on the borders of Kashgar. At the same time we have added very considerably to the native army. The Imperial troops, of whom for many reasons we are justly proud, are not so very different from the highly trained contingents of Gwalior and Indore which gave us so much trouble in 1857. It is true that they are recruited, or supposed to be recruited, from the natives of the States which support them,

and are therefore less dangerous and less likely to unite for mischief. On the other hand, they are not officered by Englishmen, they are bound to us by no ties, and they afford an opportunity for training the population of these States in the use of arms. Ten thousand men were added to the British garrison some twenty years ago, but this increase has been more than counterbalanced by the great extension of our territories. It is hardly necessary to point to the proximity of Russia and her vastly increased power of doing us a mischief.

As to the feeling of the people towards the British Power, the education we have given them has hardly added to their loyalty. It raises aspirations which we are unable to satisfy. And it also teaches them how they may combine. The men who come to England for education, or to be qualified for the medical, legal, and other professions, do not return, as a rule, with more friendly or contented minds. It has been so from the time of 1857, and will be so always. Our knowledge of the people, our intimacy with them, so far from having grown with time, has, we fear, diminished. As in 1857, there is no one who will come forward to warn us of the danger that is beneath our feet. The sudden

outburst of the agitation against cow-killing in 1893 is an example of this want of information. Brigadier-General Hearsey, who knew the people well, warned the Government in 1857 against expecting information of coming danger from the native officers. Neither need we expect a danger-signal from the better class of Indians amongst the civil population.

The events of 1857 ought to deter us for ever from interfering in any way with the religious prejudices or sensibilities of the Indians, whether Mohammedan or Hindoo. We have sailed pretty close to the wind in the matter of the Age of Consent. Fortunately the Act, which was pressed on the Government of India by people in England, is practically a dead letter. We have gone still closer to the wind in the matter of plague sanitation and prevention. Here the Government found that they were touching something hard, and drew back their hand. But what do we know of the inward thoughts of the millions who felt the iron of these plague rules enter into their soul, or how far they nourish resentment on account of them? If any one thinks that it is unwise or useless to recall the events which are recorded in the volumes we have been discussing, let him ponder on these things.

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WHY ARMY CORPS?

BY "POLKOVNIK."

PUBLIC attention is concentrated upon Army Corps. The military reformers mock at them in Parliament. The man in the street wonders what exactly they can mean. The taxpayer is convinced that their introduction into our army system is at the root of his present troubles, and that their abolition is imperatively demanded by the financial situation. And, what is most unfortunate, the frequent references in debates in both Houses and in the press to this Continental form of subdividing armies have tended to obscure the main issue between the Government and those who distrust its military policy.

It is not proposed to discuss here Mr Brodriok's scheme in its entirety. But it is hoped

that, by an examination of the military requirements of the country as met by an Army Corps organisation, it will be shown that this is unsuited to the conditions of the British Empire alike in peace and in war. And before proceeding further it will be worth while for a moment to consider what is the *raison d'être* of Army Corps in the military systems of modern Europe.

The great military Powers have broken up their hosts into this class of unit because the soldiers and guns and horses at their command are so vast in number that, did their organisation include no larger unit than, let us say, the ordinary Division, their armies would take the field as thirty, forty, fifty Divisions. Were this the

case the commander-in-chief would have to deal directly with thirty, forty, fifty general officers. The inconvenience of such an arrangement is obvious. And so a Power like Germany arranges that its army shall in time of war be formed into three or four distinct armies, each consisting of from four to six Army Corps. When such masses of men have to be dealt with, there is a clear reason for their subdivision into units of some 40,000 men of all arms complete in every detail. During the course of the campaign these Army Corps maintain their organisation, and the Divisions composing them remain together under the Army Corps general. The detaching of any of the component parts seldom occurs. The Army Corps is at once a necessity and a reality. But how does all this apply to the regular army of the United Kingdom?

Apart from the provision of permanent garrisons abroad and their maintenance, the military forces recruited in, and paid for by, the United Kingdom must—to put it broadly—be prepared in time of war for the performance of two distinct duties. An organisation must exist admitting of the despatch of an expedition or expeditions to foreign theatres of war, and this duty falls upon the regular army. Home defence must be provided for, and there can be no question that in the opinion of the country this is a duty which in the main devolves upon the auxiliary forces. It

is the purpose of this article to show that the Army Corps as a unit is as ill adapted to the one case as to the other.

Take first the question of the despatch of an army to a foreign theatre of war.

The transport of a force of all arms properly equipped over the seas involves, of course, the question of shipping, and if the force assumes large proportions the amount of shipping required becomes very great. It is true that the British Empire has at its command a colossal mercantile marine. It is true, moreover, that the numerous great seaports of the United Kingdom afford rare facilities for the rapid embarkation of troops. But, even so, the question of maritime transport perforce reduces the size of the army which can be despatched at short notice across the ocean from the British Isles to proportions which upon the Continent would be regarded almost with contempt. Any such army should obviously be a compact self-contained force organised for the purpose in peace-time. And the experiences of 1899 have placed it beyond question that the conditions do not admit of a military force approaching to the size of an Army Corps being on a sudden emergency despatched from this country otherwise than in dribblets.

The first principle which should govern a maritime Power in organising its land forces for offensive war based on the sea is that these should be broken up into, relatively

speaking, small bodies of troops of all arms, with their trains and hospitals complete,—bodies of troops which can be very rapidly enshipped and rapidly disembarked, ready to strike home in the territories of the enemy. And this principle, as obvious as it is elementary, is set at defiance by our Army Corps organisation.

When the Army Corps was despatched to South Africa in 1899 there was much complacent and not altogether unpardonable self-congratulation over the ease with which the thing was done. But it took a month to get the Army Corps to sea. The cavalry and artillery, which should have arrived first, arrived last. And on reaching their destination, the Divisions, brigades, and staffs were in confusion; there were generals without troops and troops without generals; the whole organisation was completely out of gear. This is not the way to make war in this twentieth century. The Army Corps is far too large a unit for such purposes. Our fighting army, our regular troops which form the complement of our sea-power, are not organised so as to fulfil the object for which they are obviously intended in the scheme of national defence.

And it is not only because of its inapplicability to work in conjunction with the Royal Navy that the Army Corps scheme stands condemned. The War Office scheme proposes three such Army Corps, without making any provision for line-of-communications troops. Al-

most inevitably, therefore, there will not be more than two of them acting as a field army after a short period of warfare: the other will be broken up in rear. There will be only two Army Corps for the commander-in-chief to carry on active operations with. And it would be far more convenient for him, it would save much useless staff, it would lessen impedimenta, and it would greatly facilitate organisation in peace-time, if these two Army Corps were simply six Divisions, each self-contained with its heavy guns, its hospitals, its telegraph troops, and so forth. An army of two Army Corps is an absurdity—it is a contravention of one of the fundamental principles upon which military forces in the field are organised.

For while, as Continental experience proves, an Army Corps organisation works excellently as long as the Army Corps is kept intact, it collapses when part of the Army Corps becomes detached. The so-called "Corps troops"—howitzers, heavy guns, telegraph troops, bridging troops, hospitals—have their own supply columns and ammunition columns, and if they split up there is much confusion. And if the three Divisions which form the bulk of an Army Corps have to work separately—and this will assuredly occur from time to time in a field army consisting, all told, of only two Army Corps—one of the three will find itself weighed down by the incubus of an

Army Corps commander with his staff, and with an undue proportion of "Corps troops" impedimenta. All which was proved to demonstration in South Africa.

The Army Corps despatched in October and November 1899 was shattered to pieces on the landing-stages of Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, and Durban. But some of the pieces got together again in Natal; to these were added fresh units from home, a good deal of the Army Corps framework came to hand and more was improvised, and so it came about that Ladysmith was eventually relieved by a military force to all intents and purposes organised as an Army Corps, and nearly equal to one in actual strength. But when this military force later on advanced, the conditions of the case compelled disintegration: brigades, Divisions, were shuffled off and left behind; and it was only due to the ineffective opposition offered by the Boers that the staff were able to reorganise and rearrange so gradually and with such deliberation that little confusion resulted in the process. The end of the Natal Army Corps was, however, that a force of two battalions, two mounted corps, and ten guns found itself in the heart of the alpine regions of the eastern Transvaal accompanied by the general commanding with his staff, a divisional general with his staff, a brigadier with his staff, and that all this multitude of officers and orderlies

and servants and hangers-on and horses, tacked on to the insignificant fighting force, had to be fed with supplies dragged over the thirty worst miles of waggon-road in South Africa from Lydenberg, itself fifty miles from the railway.

The fact is that a military force limited to 120,000 men, as Mr Brodrick contemplates, is too small to be formed into Army Corps. A cumbrous organisation is being imposed for no adequate reason,—an organisation which, even assuming the whole 120,000 men to be operating in one theatre of war, is almost certain to prove itself inconvenient in the field. But when we take maritime considerations into account, this organisation is not merely cumbrous and unnecessary, it is entirely wrong, and totally unsuited to the conditions of this country.

Our fighting army should be organised in Divisions and not in Army Corps, and these Divisions should on no account be too large. It is doubtful if our existing Divisions, were they adequately strengthened with cavalry and their share of "Corps troops," would not form too strong a unit for expeditionary purposes across the sea. However, that is a point of detail. The great point is that these Divisions should be fully organised and kept together in peace-time under the generals who will command them in case of war. And a great advantage of this organisation would be that it admits of one or more Divisions

being kept at war-strength in peace-time, ready to embark at once—Divisions comparable to that brigade of infantry, that brigade of cavalry, and that brigade-division of artillery which came from India and saved Natal in October 1899. Even the War Office, with its army system made in Germany, its linked battalions, and its forts round London, might then perhaps manage to have one Division at Aldershot fit to take the field.¹

So much for the regular army, the fighting army. The applicability of an Army Corps organisation to home defence comes up for consideration next.

The tide has crept up from Whitehall to the War Office. There is a whiff of the salt sea pervading cobwebbed passages in Pall Mall. The very messenger boys belong to the blue-water school. Invasion, battles of Dorking, final stand by the fountains of the Crystal Palace, have ceased to please; and the military authorities at headquarters appear really to have come round to the view held by the Navy, the Army, and the public, that the problem of home defence only consists of providing against raids by an enemy upon the coasts of the United Kingdom. Their state is the more gracious. But what need is there for Army Corps to fend off, or eject, or destroy comparatively small

hostile forces undertaking enterprises of this class? The most cursory examination of the subject shows the incongruity of the idea.

The very essence of a raid carried out by the military forces of a Power which does not command the sea upon the coasts of a hostile Power which does, is that the expedition shall be upon a small scale. The enterprise must be secret and sudden. The inevitable risk of being, in a military sense, wiped out, forbids the employment of a great array of men and guns and horses. It is safe to assume that in no raid upon the littoral of the United Kingdom would more than 5000 men be employed, and that the force would come weak in guns and cavalry. So the object of home defence is so to distribute available military resources that a hostile expedition on this scale shall certainly be checked ere it can work serious harm,—actually to prevent the landing would rarely be possible if the foe enjoyed reasonably good fortune,—and that reinforcements shall rapidly arrive to aid the defensive troops on the spot, to drive the enemy back, and if possible to compel his capitulation.

Of course only certain stretches of coast-line need be considered at all; for an enterprise so hazardous would not be undertaken except to attain some object worth attain-

¹ To suggest the number of Divisions which should be organised would be to open up the whole question of strength of the regular army, the question of quality *versus* quantity.

ing. The landing of hostile troops on the shores of Norfolk or of Carnarvonshire or of Sutherland is incredible. As a strategical question the defence of the United Kingdom is a simple one enough; but it is essentially a question of brigades, and not of Army Corps. The raid would either have been repelled or else would have effected its object long before an Army Corps could reach the spot, even taking into account the rare railway facilities possessed by the country.

To do the War Office but justice, it seems rather inclined to abandon the idea of Army Corps in the case of the Eastern, Northern, and Scottish commands; and if this unnecessary complication were removed from these, their organisation might work satisfactorily enough in peace and in war, were it not for the unfortunate situation in the Southern and Irish commands. The Southern and Irish commands are unhappily fatally involved in the Army Corps scheme. When war breaks out their commanders and central staff disappear. The head is separated from the trunk. And the consequence is that not only are the Southern and Irish commands thrown into a state of chaos, but that the Eastern, Northern, and Scottish commands are dragged in to put the matter right. The excellent system of dividing up the United Kingdom into five great territorial commands—Aldershot being on a separate footing—is ruined by the regular

troops in two of them being organised as Army Corps.

Moreover, to form the Army Corps for the Southern command it is necessary to tack on to it the South-Eastern District, with its large garrisons of Dover and Shorncliffe, although this obviously should belong to the Eastern command, which contains a mass of Militia and Volunteers, and, on the other hand, has only a restricted coast-line to defend. The Southern command is responsible for a vast stretch of littoral, dotted with important localities which might tempt an enemy to try a raid. The dockyards of Pembroke, Devonport, and Portsmouth all fall within it; and it includes the naval bases of Falmouth, Portland, and Spithead, as well as the great coal-stores of Cardiff. But the area which it includes is, comparatively speaking, weak in auxiliary forces. Had it not been for the Army Corps the mobilisation branch could surely have worked out the subdivision of the country into great territorial commands more in accordance with the strategical requirements. And it is interesting in this connection to call to mind that when the military forces in India were reorganised some years ago the four Army Corps originally contemplated dropped out of sight, and that four territorial commands took their place, arranged on sound principles of strategy and adapted to the then existing localisation of the troops.

Against the Army Corps the

case is overwhelming. It is as an organisation totally unsuited to the regular forces in the British Isles—so unsuitable as to be absolutely mischievous from the strategical point of view. It is not adapted to the requirements of home defence, and its introduction into our military system has marred and disfigured a scheme of decentralisation otherwise full of promise. It adds appreciably to the cost of an army, the expense of maintaining which is, even without it, out of all proportion to the results obtained.

For the Army Corps there

is no case worth bringing into court. There is nothing to support it except inapplicable precedents borrowed from the Continent.

Let the War C at ties throw their A v C scheme overboard. h it cumbers the decks even trim the ship, mu get up hatches to lumber—exag; superfluous : y, imi ture soldiery t v i t —which to d vn her safe- v -1 make a mis is l , but stick to it in

IMPERIAL STRATEGY.

BY A STAFF OFFICER.

THREE months have passed since I last had the honour of writing for 'Maga,'¹ and during this period much water has flowed down to the sea. A great and beneficent change has come over the face of public opinion: in press, in Parliament, and in the country the question of national defence has been taken up on all sides with a zeal, an earnestness, and a knowledge that have never before been devoted to the consideration of things that belong to our peace. We have made a very considerable advance; we have harked back to first principles, and, most important of all, we have achieved the seemingly impossible task of interesting the best brains among the leading statesmen of the country in the vital question of our national security. Once this desirable consummation achieved, it was inevitable that the desired solution would ultimately work itself out like any simple problem in algebra. *Gaudeamus igitur!* We can, temporarily at least, lay down some of the weapons we used in battering our opponent, and help to build a golden bridge for his retreat from a manifestly untenable position.

OUR BALANCE CREDIT.

Let us reckon up the credit

side of our balance: there is, first, the new Committee of Imperial Defence, which will be judged by its works, but promises the co-ordination of all our preparations by land and sea and the convergence of effort towards a single purpose. There is the acceptance by the Premier of the main doctrines of the blue-water school, and his admission that the land defence of these islands can be safely intrusted to the auxiliary forces; there is the adhesion to the principle that we must seek for quality rather than quantity in our regular Army; and, lastly, there is the partial solution of the North Sea question by the promise of a new naval base in the Firth of Forth, and the creation of its natural concomitant, the new Home Fleet.

These decisions are not mere counsels of tactical expediency, not the pie-crust promises of perfunctory politicians, but irrevocable steps forward on the path of reform, and a serious advance towards the always unattainable bourne of perfection. They entail the eventual abandonment of the Army Corps Scheme² of 1901, in so far as this was based upon the utterly absurd and heretical foundation of home defence by land forces after the loss of the command of the sea, and they are like water in a thirsty

¹ See "National Strategy," 'Maga,' February 1903.

² See "Why Army Corps?" p. 583, *supra*.—Ed.

land to wanderers in the spacious desert of War Office fatuity.

THE PATH OF REFORM.

What follows from the admissions that have been made and the suggestions that have been put forward? First, that in view of our naval predominance we do not require a large regular Army at home for the defence of these islands, and that we are entitled to both demand and obtain a greater advantage from the fact of our insularity, and consequently a greater relief from the military burdens that we have to bear. Secondly, that we require a regular Army at home, highly efficient, immediately available, and organised in small and handy units of all arms, to act as the auxiliary of our Navy, of a strength based on the strategic action of the Navy under such reasonable strategical hypotheses as may secure acceptance by the Committee of Defence. Thirdly, that a reorganised Militia may be trusted with the conduct of land defence at home and the provision of garrisons for our naval arsenals, and that consequently it must be made equal to the task allotted to it. Fourthly, that the regular Army at home should be a short-service force on the model of the Guards, and should not be depleted by the drafts for India, which can be provided equally well and at a third of the cost by reorganised depots, themselves expanding into effective units on mobilisation. Fifthly, that the

Volunteers must be utilised, not as a spurious field Army, demanding claims on the time of business men that forces them to abandon either their profession or their volunteering, but as the national school of arms to train the largest possible number of men in the skilful use of the rifle, so that we may form a reservoir of men at home on whom we can draw in time of need. Lastly, that as we cannot ensure the immediate despatch of large numbers of troops abroad in the event of a war with two great naval Powers, India and all our colonies and possessions over-sea must be rendered capable of conducting their own defence, in the first instance, with the resources on the spot.

It is on these lines that the reorganisation of our military forces must proceed, and it will be in proportion as future reforms meet these wants or fail to meet them that the administration chiefly concerned will be judged.

LAND OR SEA?

No nation on earth is sufficiently rich or powerful to pretend to dominate both the sea and the land, and nothing is more certain than that a Power which commits itself to the futile pursuit of this chimera will find itself inferior on each element in turn, after beggaring itself in the quest. If we cannot read the lesson taught us by France, we are blind indeed. At each epoch in her history France has pursued this double objective

by sea and land, and has wasted her resources on a double purpose. In wealth, in influence, and in population she once stood *facile princeps* among the Western nations: she has sunk to the second grade because she presumed to attain the unattainable.

There is no doubt—there can be none—which element we should elect to rule; and this being so, our policy, both in the broadest diplomatic sense and in every detail of statecraft, should be framed to correspond with this leading principle, that our future lies on the sea, and that it is there alone we can hope to be supreme. Compare this with our position and see whether practice conforms with precept. We have a home and colonial establishment of 850,000 men, and a native army in India of 150,000 more. We have the lien on the feudatory armies of India, which might be greatly strengthened; we have native levies in Africa and elsewhere; and, last but not least, the Colonial Militia, already fairly numerous, and capable, as the war has proved, of immense expansion. All told, we maintain nearly 1,200,000 men at a moment when there is no enemy in the field against us save a handful of scallywags under a Mullah who appears from this cursory survey of Imperial statistics to fully deserve the somewhat disparaging adjective which history has bestowed upon him. It is a formidable total: it is a peace strength double that of Germany or France, and considerably larger than that of Russia,

and it is no matter for surprise that the cost of the defence of the Empire by land and sea amounts already to 84 millions a-year, and that it threatens shortly to rise to 100 millions unless drastic measures of reform are applied. If, for every man we maintain in time of peace, we were able, as are the great military Powers, to place our hands on four in the reserve, we should at all events have value for our money; but it is the peculiarity of our system that when we ask it to adapt itself to war conditions, we find that instead of expanding it shrivels up, and that we cannot place in the field, at the very outside, more than one man for every four we maintain in time of peace. The true test of a military system is its applicability or the reverse to the state of war: all other tests are fallacious and absurd. We have the minimum of hitting power at the maximum of cost, and it will be the great task of the Committee of Imperial Defence to profoundly modify a situation that is not defensible on the grounds of either necessity or reason.

INVASION.

Let us now turn for a moment to consider the point of view of our eventual enemy. It is obvious that we must permit him to think for himself, and that he will think of everything that is most unpleasant for us. If he is a great military Power, the first thing to remember is that soldiers will dominate in

his war councils rather than sailors. It follows that these councils are morally certain to advise that their strength should be brought to bear against our weakness, and that every endeavour should be made to meet us on land, where we are weak, and not on sea, where we are strong. Nearly every Power has given hostages to fortune in the guise of colonies or exposed possessions, which are in a greater or less degree indefensible while we are supreme at sea. Military advice will under these circumstances be certain to require a rapid solution of the war in order to save these colonies from capture; and it is nearly certain that it will demand a blow at the heart and the invasion of England as the best possible means of settling the point at issue in a sense agreeable to its interest. The whole volume of evidence of the opinions of leading soldiers on the Continent points conclusively and beyond a doubt to the invasion of England as the ultimate if not the immediate aim of every plan of operations. This does not exclude subsidiary operations against outlying portions of our Empire, but rather renders them more certain, as means to cause us to dis-seminate our forces and make us experience the sense of our weakness; but all these secondary operations will only lead up to the grand finale of invasion, in which the enemy's Navy plays the rôle of a simple auxiliary.

There is no relaxation so exhilarating for a Continental soldier, no great problem of

strategy so engaging and so simple, as the invasion of England—on paper.

In France the Napoleonic tradition of the mastery of the Channel for three days, followed by invasion, lies at the root of every scheme against us. As for Germany, we have only to read Moltke's views, expressed in the course of the campaign against Denmark, to perceive the same identical ideas prevailing,—all the risks thoroughly understood, but the stupendous results of success warranting almost any conceivable risk to attain it. We may reserve our opinion on the probability of success: but let us admit that Napoleon and Moltke, in their prime and according to their lights, were fairly respectable authorities on questions of strategy; or let us at least acknowledge that no one, in their respective countries, has sufficient weight and authority to destroy the legends they have bequeathed to their descendants and successors. What is the lesson for us? Six hundred thousand men at home, and forts on the Surrey Hills? Nothing of the sort! If there were no Channel we should be forced to resort to conscription; but as there is a Channel, and as the sea is the element upon which we happen to be supreme, it is there that the Empire must be defended. But an invasion of England, to have a vestige of a chance of success, must be strong in numbers, and must consequently utilise many ports of embarkation: each port can only

contain a certain number of ships, and from the great majority of ports only a certain limited number of vessels can steam out at each tide. It is not absolutely inconceivable that some unhappy fragments of the new Armada may reach our inhospitable shores in blissful ignorance of the fate of the rest. Hence our Home Militia must be organised in small and handy units as a mobile force, to act against these and other raiders; for the threat of invasion must not induce us to keep idle the striking force of regulars destined to complete the action of our Navy on the enemy's coast—action which in all probability will of itself, if well planned and vigorously conducted, strangle at its birth in its maritime cradle all idea of invasion from over-sea.

THE NORTH SEA.

Our new base in the Firth of Forth will completely fulfil our requirements as against Russia in home waters, but in a much less satisfactory degree against Germany. It only, however, solves the problem of squadron warfare in the North Sea, and does not completely respond to all our requirements in relation to the war against commerce. It is within our power to obtain complete strategical grasp of the North Sea, by virtue of our maritime supremacy, whenever we desire it. We can make the ocean a *mare clausum* against the fleets of Europe by a comprehensive and intelligent use of our ter-

ritory; but this power has been only fully developed, in relation to the Northern nations, by the recent adaptation of wireless telegraphy to the purposes of maritime warfare—an achievement which provides the most notable accession of strength to the superior Navy that the heart of man can desire. Russia possesses some fine cruisers, with a very considerable radius of action. Germany, on her side, owns a numerous fleet of merchant cruisers superior in speed, of their class, to anything in the world. These vessels are earmarked for the attack on our trade in time of war; and in order to damage this trade effectually they must quit the North Sea and the Baltic, and establish themselves on the throat of the great trade-lines which converge upon the shores of the United Kingdom from America and the Cape. To leave the North Sea they must either pass down the Channel or steam round the north of Scotland, and the Channel gauntlet is so eminently unattractive and dangerous that the northern line may be preferred. Now the islands of Orkney and Shetland continue our territory to within 200 miles of Bergen in Norway, and if we patrol this zone with a few scouts, provided with wireless equipment, we can have passed on, if necessary by receiving stations at Orkney and Shetland, immediate warning of any attempt to break out of the North Sea. A few cruisers lying in a properly prepared and equipped

base in Caithness can steam out and intercept the rovers, with all the advantage of full bunkers, and in such strength as may be necessary to make a certainty of bringing their quarry to book.

The Admiralty have made some provision at Peterhead, but it is not adequate; nor is this base sufficiently far north to give our cruisers the full advantage of the start, and, in war, time is everything, and once lost can never be regained. This cruiser squadron will act as the three-quarter backs of our team, the forwards off the enemy's coast being the destroyers, scouts, and fast cruisers, and the half-backs the battle fleet which may be in port or at sea. We have unfortunately allowed the public to believe that we are going to blockade all the enemy's ports and keep him sealed up like a postal order in a registered envelope. Whether this is or is not the naval view is another matter: the point is that the public believes this will be done, and will be proportionately disappointed and alarmed when it finds that the closest watch will not necessarily prevent the escape of a determined enemy.

There is a passage in Nelson's despatches which ought to be hung up during a maritime war in every place where men congregate: "My system is the very contrary of blockading. Every opportunity has been offered the enemy to put to sea, for it is there we hope

to realise the hopes and anticipations of our country." Blockading, popular style, is not feasible against the great naval Powers, as all our manoeuvres have proved, including the latest; and, if it were, it is contrary to common-sense, for our purpose must be to fight for the command of the sea, and if we keep the enemy from putting to sea, there will be no fighting, unless we are adequately equipped to go a-ferretting in the manner suggested in a previous article.¹ If we allow and encourage the enemy to put to sea, he may give our forwards the slip; and if he is bent on commerce-raiding with fast ships, he may give the battleships the go-by as well: we want our three-quarter backs in the Channel and off Caithness to make sure of him, and with these we may hope to keep the ocean as clear for our tramps against the northern Powers as it is in time of peace. The cruiser base in Caithness appears, for these reasons, to be necessary for providing our ships with a jumping-off place, properly equipped for the purpose it is destined to serve.

THE MEDITERRANEAN.

The same idea of making the ocean a *mare clausum* to European enemies can be as well or better applied to the Mediterranean by a preliminary concentration at Gibraltar, which puts the cork into the Mediterranean bottle. By this

¹ See "National Strategy," 'Maga,' February 1903.

means we can hold up all the chief fleets and commerce-destroyers of Europe, save such ships as France may keep in her Channel and Atlantic ports, which can be dealt with by other means. It enables the two great trade-routes to America and the south, with their many feeders, to be adequately protected, though the shield that covers them is invisible to the homing tramps. It entails, indeed, the isolation of Malta, the semi-isolation of Egypt, and the temporary abandonment of the Mediterranean as a route for trade.

If there be a strategist in Europe willing to take a military expedition to Malta, while we have a superior and unbeaten fleet at Gibraltar, he must be one of those choice spirits whose value for the conduct of forlorn-hopes is beyond a price. No doubt it is not agreeable to abandon a trade-route, even temporarily, nor is it by any means a simple matter to divert trade from its customary tracks. But we need not worry ourselves with Orders in Council on such a subject, for the shipping trade is very wide-awake and highly sensitive, and if the Mediterranean is not perfectly safe the shipping will not go there.

EGYPT.

But at the base of the Mediterranean bottle there is Egypt, and the retention of our hold upon this country is important, no matter what complexion the maritime war may assume. It is said

that quite lately some inquisitive person in Egypt asked what he was to do in case of war. Would any troops be sent? What about the defences of Alexandria? the Canal? and so forth: and Lord Goschen threw the same question into a late debate in the form of a mild and tentative interrogatory which drew forth no reply at all. The reply to Egypt is said to have been to the effect the inquirer should not bother a harassed Government, and that the latter had no idea what the answer might be to the conundrum propounded, and would Egypt be pleased to ask another. There is, of course, the Egyptian Army; but it is less numerous than it was, and a large part of it is locked up in the Soudan. Even if the entire Egyptian Army were brought down to Lower Egypt, I would not undertake to affirm that its presence there would be an entirely unmixed blessing. Egypt is, and always must be, the great link between East and West, and its occupation by another Power would be a disaster for us. Egypt is not an island, and it is not in the same position as Malta: it must inevitably attract an enemy who directly or vicariously has the dominating influence in Asia Minor, Arabia, and Syria.

It would not be so easy to-day as in 1801 to oust an enemy in possession, and, as the Mamelukes are no more, he might gain adherents in Egypt itself: at the best it would distract a large part of

our military forces to reconquer the country, and at a moment when we might ill afford to spare them. We retain a garrison in Egypt barely adequate to hold the Citadel and patrol the towns of Cairo and Alexandria. This garrison must be either withdrawn or reinforced when war threatens, and of these alternatives withdrawal is out of the question. Reinforcements can hardly come from England, since the Navy will not guarantee the convoy of troops until the command of the sea is secured, and least of all in the Mediterranean. It follows that the necessary reinforcements for Egypt must come from India, South Africa, or Australasia; and this, again, is another argument for the increase of the Indian garrison rather than of the Army at home.

INDIA.

Now, as we cannot ensure the immediate despatch of troops from home to India in the event of war with two great Powers, one of them being France, everything points to the conclusion that India must be made capable of defending herself in the first instance with her own resources. What are her requirements for the purpose? That depends very largely indeed upon her strategical ambitions, and it is not possible to fix the number until these are known and have received the preliminary sanction of the Committee of Imperial Defence. Not long ago

the strategical designs of India were of a highly ambitious character, and there were almost no limits to the reinforcements they might have required from home if the wild-cat schemes of the day had been put into execution. It is fortunately not probable that they will have secured the adhesion of either Lord Curzon or Lord Kitchener, and although nothing has been publicly announced we can feel reasonably assured that Lord Kitchener's waste-paper basket has been profitably employed. If it is true, at home, that our Army depends upon our policy, it is doubly true of India, and there is this unknown factor in the situation in the latter case, namely, that we cannot say what effect a great war in the East will have upon the mass of the people and upon the wild tribes and agglomerations of states on India's borderland. No one can give the value of this x of the Indian equation, and it is a reason the more for having a wide margin of safety in India itself.

THE STRATEGIC INITIATIVE.

This brings us to the affirmation of what should be a cardinal principle of Imperial strategy. We must never permit our enemy to dictate the strategic initiative to us, or entice us to employ the greater part of our military resources in a part of the world where we cannot promise ourselves decisive results. We should seek for ourselves the decisive theatre where we can utilise to

the full our maritime preponderance and the advantages of our alliances, and there fight out the issue; and, in case of war with Russia, we should only determine to carry out offensive operations on the N.W. frontier if a full review of all the circumstances shows us that we cannot obtain more decisive results elsewhere. The true reserve of India must be our white colonies of South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, since it is from these territories alone, under present conditions of naval war and the grouping of naval Powers, that reinforcements can safely be directed to India at the outbreak of hostilities.

THE COLONIES.

The future of the Empire lies largely in the hands of the Colonies themselves. Our object must be to raise the strength and promote the efficiency of the whole of the colonial forces, and to secure unity of purpose, effort, and doctrine by the free and constant interchange of officers between the different parts of the Empire. This object is not achieved by the mere grant of commissions in the regular Army to colonial candidates. We want something far above and beyond this petty expedient. We want the best officers of the colonial forces, of the native Army of India, and of every single force of a local complexion which tends to become narrow in its ideas from want of horizon, to be brought home to study the question of Imperial Defence

at a reorganised Staff College, where we should teach, by means of the best brains we can procure, everything relating to the question of Imperial Defence by sea and land in its widest aspects. We should, for the same purpose, send both colonial and Imperial officers to different parts of the Empire to study the local conditions, and to gain touch and make friends with the local authorities, on a methodical plan, the strings of which should be in the hands of a real Chief of the Staff at home; and so gradually build up a feeling of mutual confidence and mutual responsibility, based on a complete understanding of the resources and requirements of the different parts of the Empire. The strongest bond that it is possible to forge between communities of common origin and identical interests is the bond of association for the fulfilment of the first law of nature—self-preservation.

COLONIAL NAVIES.

This brings us to the question of colonial contributions for naval defence. Provided the resolutions of the Colonial Conference are accepted, these contributions, in which Canada takes no part, will amount to £328,000 a-year, as compared with our naval estimates of over 34 millions. It is both too little and too much. Too little, because it is less than the cost of the mere construction of a second-class cruiser; too much, because it is a derogation from the principle that taxation and representation should go hand

in hand, and because it places the Colonies in the position of not over-willing tributaries to the parent State, and contains the fruitful germs of future disagreement. The position has been reached because the Admiralty, very properly considering the sea as all one, desires to retain the exclusive direction of the naval forces of the Empire, and looks with disfavour on the creation of separate Navies by the Colonies. But this ideal can be conciliated with that of the Colonies, and it is taking too small a view of the possibilities of the future to allow this situation to endure. We must trust our Colonies all in all or not at all, and we know we can trust them. Nearly all our great Colonies over-sea are capable of becoming cradles of sea-power, but they will never devote the necessary attention and resources to this object so long as we take upon ourselves the duties and responsibilities which properly and plainly devolve upon them. The first principle of the defence of a world-wide Empire like ours is that each part of it should, in the first instance, contribute in men, money, and ships to its own defence, so that it may resist aggression with its own resources until the weight of the other parts can be brought into play; and we shall never extract the full strength and overwhelming strategic advantage that is inherent in our oceanic Empire until we encourage the great self-governing Colonies to set about the beginnings of naval power for themselves.

Lord Granville in the year 1862 established the rule of withdrawing our regular forces from the Colonies, and, despite all the objections that were taken to the measure at the time, we are bound to admit that the change has had the happiest results. It is time to carry the principle a step further, and to apply it to the naval side of the question. We should explain frankly to the Colonies that, though we can bear the strain of international rivalry in naval armaments for the time being, the hour may come, twenty or fifty years hence, when the growth of other Powers may make it impossible for the mother State to retain her supremacy on every sea against every combination, and that the time has arrived when the Colonies must begin to set about the creation of the first elements of their own Navies. We should frankly abandon the contributions, and endeavour to help, first, in training colonial officers and seamen; next, in establishing dockyards; and, finally, in supplying the first ships to form the nucleus of the future colonial Navies. Some of the colonies are as populous and as rich as was England when she so gloriously resisted the might of Spain: it should not be impossible for British Colonies to do, with our assistance, all, and more than all, Japan has done without external aid. The idea that there is a danger of Colonial Navies becoming mere useless coast-defence squadrons, incapable of intervening effectually in a

naval war, presupposes that the Colonies are incapable of recognising the strategic requirements of their position, which is absurd. If, at first, we train their officers in our Navy, and allow them to study the whole problem of naval war at the Admiralty and with our squadrons, it is certain that they will become inoculated with all the sound and healthy ideas which have so happily been retained in our Navy despite long years of peace, and that they will instil the spirit of Drake, Hawke, and Nelson into the directing councils of their people. It will be a work of time, a work perhaps of half a century: it is a reason the more for beginning at once. It is certain that in time of war these Colonial Navies will place themselves under the direction of our admirals at least as willingly as their splendid troops accepted the orders of our generals in South Africa. Union is strength, and the Colonies know it.

BRAIN AND MUSCLE.

Finally, there are two qualities of brain and muscle which make largely for success in war. We have not been too fortunate of late in our ambassadors, and our estrangements and misunderstandings with foreign Powers are very largely to be attributed to this cause. It would be an immeasurable ad-

vantage if the highest influence in the land could induce a few of our *grandeesh*, who combine ability with wealth, high character, and social eminence, to undertake the charge of two or three of our most important embassies. If good policy makes good war, policy itself depends upon good diplomacy, and, at three at least of the great Courts, personal influence is still, and will be for long, an inestimable advantage.

Lastly, there is muscle. The gravest danger in the future is the physical degeneracy of the lower classes in England, due to drink, bad food, bad housing, bad sanitation, and the overcrowding of our great cities. The ruin of our agriculture has accompanied, if it has not determined, the rapid decline of the physique of the labouring classes, and such statistics as are available do not measure one-hundredth part of the full extent of our danger and of our loss.

The human factor is the main element in war by land and sea, and there is at this moment no question more urgent, more pressing, and more vital than a full inquiry into the cause and extent of this terrible evil, no reform more imperative than the application of the most drastic remedies in the power of legislation to provide. A strong, healthy, and vigorous manhood is the first and last word of Imperial rule.

THE PHANTOM FLEET.

"We are an island—not a continent. If we want peace, it has been dinned into our ears that we must prepare to fight. But there is a way in which we can provide a safeguard for the peace of all our dominions without preparing for offensive war, and that is by perfecting our navy."
—*Daily Paper.*

THE sunset lingered in the pale green West :
In rosy wastes the low soft evening star
Woke ; while the last white sea-mew sought for rest ;
And tawny sails came stealing o'er the bar.

But, in the hillside cottage, through the panes
The light streamed like a thin far trumpet-call,
And quickened, as with quivering battle-stains,
The printed ships that decked the parlour wall.

From oaken frames old admirals looked down :
They saw the lonely slumberer at their feet :
They saw the paper, headed *Talk from Town* ;
Our *rusting trident*, and our *phantom fleet* :

And from a neighbouring tavern surged a song
Of England laughing in the face of war,
With eyes unconquerably proud and strong,
And lips triumphant from her Trafalgar.

But he, the slumberer in that glimmering room,
Saw distant waters glide and heave and gleam ;
Around him in the softly coloured gloom
The pictures clustered slowly to a dream.

He saw how England resting on her past,
Among the faded garlands of her dead,
Woke ; for a whisper reached her heart at last,
And once again she raised her steel-clad head.

Her eyes were filled with sudden strange alarms ;
She heard the westering waters change and chime ;
She heard the distant tumult of her arms
Defeated, not by courage, but by Time.

Knowledge had made a deadlier pact with death :
Nor strength nor steel availed against that bond :
Slowly approached—and Britain held her breath—
The battle booming from the deeps beyond.

Ah ! then what anguish rose upon the wind,
And, tortured, hung between the sea and sky,
Where all her navies, baffled, broken, blind,
Slunk backward, snarling in their agony !
Who guards the gates of Britain now ? The cry
Stabbed heaven ! *Ah, God, the shattered ramparts fall !*
And suddenly there pealed an answer : "*I*
Stand here for God and England !" Through the pall
Of cannon-smoke that voice burst like a trumpet-call.

Then came a distant sound of breaking waves
Rolling from out the sunset-coloured gloom ;
A multitudinous rumour of rending graves,
And generations rising from their tomb :
With sound imperious as the dawn of doom
They bade the conqueror pause upon his way ;
From coast to coast the cannon ceased to boom ;
The heaving fleets in broken anguish lay,
Listening with such prayers as words can never pray.

I stand for God and England ! The great East
Heard, and was rent asunder as a veil :
Host upon host out of the night increased
Its towering clouds and crowded zones of sail :
England, our England, canst thou faint or fail ?
We come to fight for England yet once more !
This, this is ours at least ! Count the great tale
Of all these dead that rise to guard thy shore
By right of the red life they never feared to pour.

We come to fight for England ! On they came ;
One cloud of conquest sweeping down to lee ;

And there, through all their thousands, flashed like flame
The deathless signal of the Victory :
And there was Nelson, watching silently
His great ship rush before the stormy van,
And still his timeless watchword ruled the sea :
England expects this day that every man
Will do his duty : and still in front the Victory ran.

Nelson, our Nelson, frail and maimed and blind,
Stretched out his dead cold face against the foe :
And England's Raleigh followed hard behind,
With all his eager fighting heart aglow ;
Glad, glad for England's sake once more to know
The old joy of battle and contempt of pain ;
Glad, glad to die, if England willed it so,
The traitor's and the coward's death again ;
But hurl the world back now as once he hurled back Spain.

And there were all those others, Drake and Blake,
Rodney and Howard, Byron, Collingwood ;
With deathless eyes aflame for England's sake,
As on their ancient decks they proudly stood,—
Decks washed of old with England's purplest blood ;
And there, once more, each rushing oaken side
Bared its dark-throated, thirsty, gleaming brood
Of cannon, watched by laughing lads who died
Long, long ago for England and her ancient pride.

We come to fight for England! The great sea
Before the rushing bows began to break
In roaring cataracts, as the Victory
Drew them in her inviolable wake :
With all their gleaming guns in deadly rake
And silent menace, towards the foe they passed,
Crying, O England, England, for our sake
Whose guns are dumb for ever, now at last
Behold us die once more, then let the past be past.

We come to die for England : through the hush
Of gathered nations rose that regal cry,
From naked oaken walls one word could crush
If those vast armoured throats but dared reply :
And there the most implacable enemy

Felt his eyes fill with gladder, prouder tears,
 As Nelson's calm eternal face went by,
 Gazing beyond all perishable fears
 To some imperial end above the waste of years.

Through the deep hush the vision streamed away
 Silently towards the smouldering crimson West,
 And a strange peace covered the fleets that lay
 Heaving upon the breathless ocean's breast.

Far, far away, the yearning voiceless nations
 Saw the great Light that brings the end of wars
 Guiding the dead and deathless generations,
 Till love and awe and wonder brought the stars:

But ere the last faint colour ebb'd in heaven
 That ancient host returned to rest at last;
 And voices cried across the empurpled even,
Reign, England, reign, and let the past be past.

*Thy heritage is rich; and it is thine
 By right of toil on every land and sea;
 And by that crimson sacrificial wine
 Of thine own heart and thine own agony.*

*Thy heritage is rich; but every hour
 Demands the present labour: this alone
 Preserves to thee that regal right and power
 Whereof the past is but the cushioned throne.*

*Look to the fleet! Again and yet again
 Hear us who storm thy heart with this one cry;
 Hear us who cannot help, though fain and fain
 To hold the breach before thee and to die.*

*Look to the fleet! thy fleet! the first, last line;
 England, it is thy sword, thy strength, thy shield,
 Thy food, thy life-blood! England, it is thine
 Now, now, to hold the birthright or to yield.*

*England, what are thy dead to thee? God's Ross,
 What are thy last year's petals to the breeze,
 Unless thy spirit in dreaming of them knows
 The eternal light that laps them round with peace?*

Then, all night long, the imperious days of old
Swept back through misty zones of blood and tears,
And cloudy visions towards the darkness rolled
The sad returning pageant of the years.

Slowly, o'er tides where toil and tumult cease,
Through shadowy gulfs the Victory returned,
To harbour on the shores of perfect peace,
And from her mast no battle-message burned :

And, following her, there drew through phantom skies
The faded Temeraire with misty spars,
The black blur of the coughing tug, and cries
Of seamen looking eastward towards the stars.

Then host on host, from heaven's remotest bound,
In silence drew their zone of mystic light,
Each with a sovran stillness haloed round,
Majestically moving towards the night.

ALFRED NOYES.

THE IRISH LAND BILL.

BY AMHAS.

IN the end of February last a great storm swept over Ireland. Thousands of ancient trees were uprooted. The roof of the Land Commission buildings was blown away; and while the tempest was at its height the body of Sir Gavan Duffy, the ex-Fenian, was safely landed in Dublin. In old days these things would have been regarded as omens of political events about to come. But there is reason to hope that the stillness that has reigned in Ireland for the last few months will not be followed by any political storm. Had the new Land Bill proved a less important measure, such storm would most surely have followed. But the Bill, although it gives to neither landlord nor tenant all that they asked, appears to come up to what they really hoped. There can be no doubt that the first impression made is favourable, and that the mild grumbling of both parties—each hoping to get better terms still before the measure is finally passed—will not prevent the acceptance of the Bill as a whole. There are clauses which will be hotly contested, but these are not vital to the general idea. There are interests that will be regarded as being assailed, but they are not strong enough to wreck the measure. Changes in detail are certain to be introduced in Parliament; and, when these

are made, the Bill will no doubt be passed. We look forward, therefore, to the debate on the second reading with great interest.

Public expectation has been raised to a very high pitch, not only by the speeches of the Nationalist members of Parliament, but yet more by the words of those in authority, and by the passage in the King's Speech about the measure. For months past men have gone about saying that "O'Brien has settled the land question"; and landlords have pronounced their opinion that if it were so settled, peace would reign at last in their native land. But if, after all that has been done to draw together the various classes concerned, the result had been really disappointing, there is no doubt that a dangerous outburst of fury would have followed. The Bill was very necessary; for the condition of affairs under dual ownership was becoming unbearable, and the expense was ruinous to landlord and tenant alike. It will no doubt create a happier condition of affairs, and help to build up a class of yeomen-owners, of great value to Ireland. It will thus create prosperity and content, and render coercion needless. If it does all that is expected of it, this improvement may be permanent, but much depends on

administration; and no man can prophesy what the effect of any Act of Parliament will really be in the far future: nor can we feel sure that this is the only question that will arise before Ireland is fully settled, and directed on the road to success. It is enough to look to the immediate future; and there can be no doubt that a remedial measure of this kind meets the immediate needs of the country.

It is strange that the Bill should be regarded as a new departure in statesmanship, for it contains practically nothing that is new. It provides, indeed, new and simpler machinery, and it replenishes exhausted funds. It offers a moderate bonus to landlords, to cover the expenses (often heavy) of sale; and it relieves the tenant by an immediate reduction in his annual liability, while freeing him from the sense of subjection, and stimulating him to exertion. The general principle is the same as in last year's Bill, and differs little from that of existing law. Already one-sixth of the agricultural tenants in Ireland have bought their holdings, by aid of Government loans. It is now proposed to give the same chance to the remainder, by helping the poorer landlords, who could not sell without ruining themselves and their heirs. But the Bill is purely voluntary in principle, and no owner can complain of confiscation. Many indeed must regard it as a boon, and—with the exception of a few extreme men—it is more likely to be acceptable to the landlord

than it is, in some respects, to the tenant. Nor has the British taxpayer any reason to complain, for the outside cost has been stated, and proves to be moderate. An actual bonus of £12,000,000 sounds large, even when spread over fifteen years; but when we find that the taxpayer only suffers to the extent of £140,000 a-year, during this strictly limited period, the feeling will probably be—as it should be—that peace in Ireland is cheaply bought at the price. British credit is involved to the extent of perhaps £90,000,000 during the same time; but so far Britain has lost nothing by advancing money to the new owners. Some landlords say, it is true, that the recent purchasers are the cream of the old tenantry, and that the remaining five-sixths will not pay as steadily as these have done: but there is reason to doubt this pessimistic view; for the same influences that have been brought to bear—by politicians and priests—on the peasantry will continue to be exerted, in order to produce confidence in Great Britain, and to show that Irishmen are worthy of trust.

The preparation of the situation has been careful and business-like, and this also augurs well for the future. Landlord and tenant have been encouraged to meet together, and to express their desires. The conference—so much dreaded—resulted in a final acceptance of its proposals by the opposing landlords, as well as by the tenants, and has done

much good also by promoting a better feeling between the classes interested. It is true that neither has got all that was asked: but the principle of State aid has been conceded; and the extravagance of the proposals has been reduced, those in authority knowing Ireland well enough to be sure that this was expected. At the conference the landlords were allowed to ask for some thirty years' purchase—if they could get it; and the tenants for a reduction of from fifteen to twenty-five per cent in their present annual liability for their lands. As pointed out by Dr Walsh, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, the conference never stated how long the tenants were to go on paying this reduced annual amount. They were induced by Mr O'Brien to believe it would only represent some eighteen or twenty years' purchase. They will now see that the archbishop was right; but the question of immediate yearly liability is much more important, in their eyes, than the actual amount of the purchase-money, spread over more than two generations. Landlords, on the other hand, find that the Bill on an average gives them only twenty-eight years' purchase; but the sensible ones never expected more, and the poorer ones are intended to get nearly thirty-three. The Bill, indeed, is a Bill for the poor, whether landlord or tenant; and, as such, it has to strive against many claims of the rich and powerful. It will appeal to the merciful—who will receive

mercy; but, if extreme men were allowed to have their way, we should in no long time come to that condition which preceded the French Revolution, and it would then be too late to stay the inevitable doom that awaits the prejudice and pride of the blind foes of their own order.

Meantime Government has been busy in inquiring into the actual results of land purchase, with a view to learning what would be the effect of stimulating the previous action if found useful. The result appears to be encouraging. The history of land tenure, in Ireland and in Britain, is not as different as some would have us believe. It is the result of conquest; but the growth of private rights has been the same. The Saxons recognised Folk-land and Book-land, much as tribal land and Norman fiefs were recognised in Ireland. Folk-land was the communal property, which could revert to the people. Book-land was a perpetual inheritance, secured by charter, and free from certain burdens. In both countries Folk-land is now reduced—by the growth of civilisation—to the jealously guarded common-land. The only way by which the actual tillers of the soil can expect to regain the land is by the creation of small properties, sufficient for the owner, but not large enough to admit of his taking tenants. If, in the past, the peasantry have been unjustly deprived of lands by the great, it is not unjust that they should be helped, by public money, to recover a free ownership of such

land as they may really need. The real difference between Great Britain and Ireland lies in the fact that fifty-six per cent of the Irish population is agricultural, or pastoral, by occupation, and that in England the proportion is much smaller, while the Irish peasantry have few to help them, as compared with those of the wealthier island. But it is possible, under wise laws, for a people to thrive when a majority of the nation live by the plough, as long as they are owners of their lands. There seems to be no reason why we should think that, in Ireland, peasant owners would fail as they do in Sicily, or Italy, under a corrupt government. In Denmark, and in Belgium and France, peasant ownership succeeds. It has been introduced into Germany with good results; and our present ideas are thus in accordance with a very general movement in other highly civilised countries.

The Government inquiry into the results of land purchase in Ireland favours this view. It is said that 80,000 tenants have now bought their lands. The general rental from the remaining lands is stated at £4,000,000 a-year, representing about 490,000 holdings, which gives an average rent of £8 each. But in a very large proportion of the holdings—especially in the west—rent does not exceed £5 for any ten acres. The inquiry into the cases where purchase has been completed was not one-sided, for various results are recorded. In some instances, when too much was paid, or

where the purchaser was already encumbered, there has been failure. There has been a disposition to subdivide, and to build new cottages for a son, or for a “con-acre” tenant; or there has been mortgage—usually to the village grocer. But, taken as a whole, the result has been most satisfactory. The new owners have improved their lands, and have prospered. In some cases the advance has been almost incredible; and the pride of independence has rendered men anxious to meet all their liabilities, and to keep their property free from any charges. Thus, while it is clear that safeguards against subdivision and reckless mortgaging are very necessary, it is also clear that the system of small holdings held by actual occupying owners is one capable of very valuable results.

The Land Bill is said to be a very complicated measure, and it fills 39 folio pages of print. Yet its main provisions are capable of easy analysis, and its 89 clauses, with one schedule, contain only the business details of a law which lays down that public credit ought to be applied to the voluntary agreements, by which the actual occupiers may in time become the actual owners of the lands that they have so long tilled. They are, in fact, to work out their own future, without detriment to those whom history had made the overlords of fields which they have ceased for twenty years really to own, having been reduced to mere charge-leviers on lands for which they cannot be expected

to do anything. The system of dual ownership was disastrous, and both parties alike desire to see it ended.

Let us look, then, for a moment into the provisions by which it is proposed to remedy this matter. The Bill contemplates a voluntary sale to tenants by landlords, the bargain being left to be settled by them within certain limits, and applying to whole estates. It is hoped that in the majority of cases this bargain will be made directly between the parties: in any case, there will be Government aid in cash and credit, subject to conditions. If it is preferred, the landlord, with consent of three-quarters—or even fewer in some cases—of the tenants, can sell the whole estate to the Land Commission and purchase back his demesne lands; and trustees can also obtain advances for purchase of woods, bogs, and pastures in the estate on conditions. We have yet to see which method will be the more generally adopted; but in some cases local friction will be overcome by sale to the Land Commission, which will make its offer, and which, when taking over, may readjust the holdings and add untenanted lands, settle disputes as to boundaries, &c., between the tenants, and spend a limited amount on improvements before establishing the new owners who are to be occupiers.

The various provisions reduce all rents to those which are current, and which have been fixed since 1896. The annual

payments by tenants, to recoup the purchase-money paid by the State to the landlord who sells, are to be on an average one-fifth less than the rent now paid, and are calculated to last for 68½ years. The new owner is, however, to continue for ever—as the Bill now stands—to pay an annual charge of one-eighth of the amount fixed, in order that the State may preserve a lien on the holding. This is a point which must be considered later. The provisions give considerable latitude for the bargain, the reduction ranging between the limits of ten and thirty per cent, which means a price of between twenty-two and twenty-eight years' purchase. On selling the landlord is to receive an average bonus, from Government, of three years' rent to cover his costs, and this also is arranged on a sliding scale which requires further consideration. The title to sell is recognised to be possession, and receipt of rents, for six years. On completion of the purchase the new owners enter at once into possession, and are not kept waiting while the question as to who is entitled to any part of the purchase-money is settled. The money is paid into the Bank of Ireland, and interest on it is paid to the former receiver of the rents. It is provided that all questions of claims, and of shares in this money, shall be settled in twelve months. The bonus only applies to the lands sold to tenants, and not to any portion reserved by, or resold to, the former landlord. The total

value of demesne so reserved is not to entail an advance by the State of more than £20,000, or of more than a third of the whole purchase price (if this is less), in any one instance, when the holdings are sold by direct bargain.

The second clause recognises the facts of existing subdivision of holdings, and of vacant land. The Bill distinguishes between ordinary and "congested" estates. The latter are not of necessity in what are now the "congested districts," but include all estates in which more than half the holdings are small and poor—that is, not over ten acres each, rated at 10s. an acre. The evicted tenants who remain as caretakers, or who have disappeared or died, are recognised as having a claim, within the estate where they once lived, to any unoccupied land. This is a very clever provision, because it will fall in with the public opinion of the tenants. If the land is vacant it is because no one dare take it; but if it has been relet it is because the public opinion of the neighbours regarded the eviction as just, or as inevitable. The Land Commission can nominate the representative of such evicted tenant, if the latter has died within the last quarter of a century. But these benefits only affect tenants of ten—or at most twenty—acres on congested estates, and up to forty acres on estates not congested. This should cover all cases of real hardship in the past; and, generally speaking, the Bill is only likely to apply to the

tenant of the average holding of twenty acres. To call this provision vindictive as regards larger tenants, who have been evicted in the past, is therefore manifestly unjust. Evicted tenants were usually reckless or dishonest, and the present offer is made to those who are able to pay rent, and who intend to carry out their new engagements. In congested estates the Commissioners are not to buy more if the result of re-sale to tenants represents, in any one year, a loss of one-tenth of the purchase-money advanced for the year. With such precaution taken, the State does not involve itself in any reckless operations leading to financial embarrassment in the future.

By the tenth clause the demand for a guarantee deposit is forbidden, and this meets a grievance against the Land Courts which was real. Three-quarters of the tenants must agree to purchase before the Commissioners can buy; but in congested estates this rule may be relaxed—a point which also requires further consideration. Estates which are in the Land Court, and as to which an order for compulsory sale has been made, can be bought by the Commissioners, if the Land Judge accepts their offered price, or otherwise sold by public auction—if a buyer can be found. In these cases the landlord receives no bonus, as they come under other arrangements. As regards sporting rights, these are to be arranged by the Commissioners at the time, if

they are the purchasers. They should not cause much friction, except in some fox-hunting districts, where it will hardly be possible for the old landlord to claim the right of hunting over the lands of the new owners without their consent. Shooting, as a rule, will be in the coverts, woods, and pastures, not over the agricultural holdings; and, unless by agreement, the landlord will have to get his pheasants in his own demesne, his snipe and duck from the lake which he likes to have before his door, and his woodcock in his woods. Rights of mining and necessary access to mines (subject to compensation for damage) are reserved; but there are very few mines in Ireland. Crown lands also, and presumably foreshores, remain the property of the Crown. Bogs are to be controlled by the Commissioners in such manner that the peasant may still get his turf, but leave a reasonable amount for the former owners' use, and not so injure the bog in cutting, as to render its final reclamation as land impossible.

The cost of all this is at present not to exceed £5,000,000 advanced in any one year, though this may be increased later. It is hardly likely that this limit will be reached, since time must elapse before the bargains are made in cases of voluntary agreement between the parties. The Commissioners are in no case to be responsible at any one time for more than this amount through the absence of any promise of

repurchase by tenants. The lands affected are to be pastoral and agricultural, and never in a town. Sub-tenants may be regarded as tenants, and all interests intervening between such actual occupiers and the actual owner will be redeemed, as part of the settlement; while the Commissioners will have to get rid of the fatal "rundale" complications, and to divide the holdings of joint-tenants. Grievances under their decisions will be heard and settled by the Land Judge, from whom there is no appeal; and, generally speaking, where the tenants and owners take advantage of the terms offered, they are not allowed to raise litigation in other courts against his decisions. The purchase will be duly advertised at least two months before its completion, to give time for the settlement of any grievance; and arrears of one year's rent can be claimed in the price—other arrears, if not remitted by the Commission, being recoverable by the State.

These arrangements are to be carried out by three nominated Commissioners, by their staff, and by the Land Judge. The ordinary fixing of fair rent goes on as usual, in cases where a property is not sold; but the cost is to be reduced, by reducing the number of inspectors employed in any one case. This also is very necessary for the poorer tenants. When negotiations for purchase are going on, further fixation of rent is disallowed. It has become unnecessary, as the provisions of the Bill provide for

the difference between first-term and second-term rents, on the supposition that the latter—the rents after 1896—are usually lowest. As regards the selling landlord, it is a simple title that is required—namely, that he has had the undisputed right to the rents for the last six years. There may be many other interests, paramount, or due to various encumbrances, such as dower, mortgage, &c.; and these have to be settled before the money that lies in the Bank of Ireland is finally distributed to its rightful owners. But this is not to affect the immediate possession by the new occupying owner. A “closing day” is to arrive twelve months after the purchase is concluded, and in this time it is expected that the distribution will be arranged. After that date interest will no longer be paid on the money banked; and, in cases of wilful delay, the offender may be fined by being deprived of all, or part, of the interest allowed.

The financial arrangements need not be considered at length. The advances are to be in cash as well as the bonus. The money is raised by loans as required, and the stock is to be cancelled as may be needful, but is not redeemable under thirty years. The Congested District Board gets an increase of £20,000 to its income, and a credit of a million and a quarter to facilitate the purchase of such estates as may be available. The bonus is the main question for Great Britain, as representing actual money spent

on the scheme. It is calculated that, at the outside, £390,000 a-year may be needed; but of this £250,000 is to be raised by economy in Irish government, and only £140,000 is to come as additional from the Imperial pocket. Whether the Land Bill will result in reduction of expenses entailed by police and Land Commission remains to be seen; but there are no doubt possibilities of reduction in a country where many survivals of past times are to be found, which a strong ruler may succeed in abolishing, though in the past they have been able to maintain themselves. The powers of investment by trustees are enlarged, which is very necessary where land questions are treated, as land appears to be still worth four per cent in Ireland. The scheme also meets an abuse which has recently sprung up, some landlords having attempted to convert their grazing tenants into actual tenants, competing with agriculturists. These will be disregarded if the holdings, created since the 1st of March 1903, exceed some ten acres each in congested estates, or twenty acres in others, with exceptional cases up to forty acres.

Provisions for the defence of the new proprietors follow, in clause 49. The new holding is not to be subdivided, or let, without consent of the Commission; and the penalty is sale of the holding. If the new owner becomes bankrupt the holding may also be sold. If, on his death, it falls into the hands of more than one person,

it may either be sold, or the heir may be nominated by the Commission, as long as he has a real interest in the land. The new owner cannot mortgage, without consent, to an amount exceeding four-tenths of the value of the land; and all mortgages must be declared to the Commission. Steps are to be taken to ensure that death, or mortgage, is reported. The congested districts are treated under special rules, by the Congested District Board in communication with the Commission. The Board is responsible that their purchases are not likely to entail serious loss on the State; and, in case State claims are proved to be irrecoverable, the loss will fall on the funds of the Board. Finally, the labourers, who possess less than a quarter acre, and whose wages do not exceed half-a-crown a-day, are to be protected from oppression; but it seems to be considered that their case does not affect the main question, since they are employed on demesnes and large properties, not likely to be sold, and not to any great extent by small agricultural tenants.

It is worthy of remark, as concerns these measures, that they have, for the most part, been long advocated in the pages of 'Maga,'¹ and that the provision is often what has therein been recommended. The appointment of a Special Commission; the treatment of

different parts of Ireland in different ways; the compensation to poor landlords; the enlargement of the powers of trustees; precautions against subdivision and letting; decreased cost both for fixation of rent and for purchase operations,—are questions the importance of which has been urged more than once in these pages, as well as the general desirability of land-purchase by occupying owners. There are one or two other points to be mentioned which are worthy of attention before the Bill becomes an Act—which have been explained in 'Maga,' and which are not noticed in the draft.² But before detailing them, attention must be called to a few sections which are certain to be contested; and in two cases these might even prove fatal to the Bill, not because they are bad in themselves, but on account of the feelings and suspicions they must arouse in Ireland. These, however, are not vital clauses. In two other cases, also, some difficulties—but of a lesser nature—will probably arise.

The first of these points is found in clause 17, according to which, if three-fourths of the tenants have promised to pay for their holdings by instalments, the Commission may buy, and even in certain cases, when the Lord-Lieutenant approves, may do so when a bare majority have promised. In these cases the minority are to

¹ See "Land Purchase" and "The State of Ireland" (by Amhas), 'Maga,' Feb. 1901, pp. 271-278, and Sept. 1901, pp. 405-415.

² See "A Policy for Ireland," 'Maga,' Feb. 1903, pp. 257-268.

forfeit the right to have their rents fixed in future, and will remain tenants on existing terms. Fixation of rent generally ceases, as we have seen, when purchase is negotiated; but these refractory tenants are to be penalised into selling, and this even, in some cases, when 51 have agreed and 49 hold out. This is a clause which is certain to be regarded with intense distrust and aversion, as withdrawing rights to which the peasantry are accustomed, and which they prize highly. They will think that, while the landlord is left free to veto any sale at all, the tenants are to be compelled to buy, if he will consent, even when half are unwilling. No doubt the intention is to prevent a few obstinate men from wilfully obstructing an arrangement generally desired. But the compulsion should not come from either the State or the landlord. Public opinion of the majority will be found in most cases to be a very strong weapon; for the most obstinate peasant in Ireland is afraid long to resist the general wishes of his neighbours and relations. He may fight them for a time, but he has always to give way in the end. The peasant will inevitably cry out for compulsion against the landlord if he is led to regard the Commission as applying it to himself; and the League will receive a new accession of strength, and will direct its exertions against the landlord—not as at present against the unpopular tenant or small farmer. It would seem likely

that the Bill will be rejected by the tenant party if this clause remains as it is. But it is surely capable of amendment. The Commission will be asked to inquire into the case as soon as the required majority has promised to purchase. Even if the provision in favour of a bare majority remains, discretion should at least be given to the Commissioners to refuse to complete the purchase unless there is at least practical unanimity among the tenants. This would soon bring the minority to its senses; and in exceptional cases, where one or two individuals elect to remain tenants, they should retain their present rights. It would no doubt be impossible to arrange the sale of an estate if the holdings were mixed up under different conditions, half being owned by the occupiers and the other half held by tenants. But it is easy to leave such a case to settle itself, as it would do within the fifteen years for which the offer holds. The majority of tenants will desire to buy, and the few could not long resist their neighbours. A penalty which is apparently unnecessary, and which is also unpopular, might well disappear from the final Act.

The second provision capable of wrecking the Bill is that in clause 40, providing a "perpetual rent - charge" of one-eighth of the annual liability. That is to say, that after sixty-eight years the holding will still be subject to a tithe of the original rent, payable to the

State as a perpetual lien on the property. The collection of this tithe would always be obstructed, and agitation for its repeal would always be fostered by any candidate for Parliament, or Leaguer, seeking popularity. In addition to this it is a reactionary arrangement, for the tenants who have bought under the existing law are not subject to any such charge. It is a provision contrary to the general spirit of the Bill, and which takes away the sense of actual free ownership, which will be the great inducement for purchase. There can be no doubt that this clause will be most stoutly opposed, and that it may seriously affect the acceptability of the Bill as a whole. The intention, as explained, is to give a right to the State for ever to guard the peasant owner against his own folly, and against the usurer, who is his worst enemy. But this should be done in another way. Ireland, we are told, is not Canada or Egypt. We may add that still less is it India. The Irish peasant takes his ideas as to land law from America. He desires to be independent; and will not consent to be kept in leading-strings like the mild Hindu—accustomed historically to the autocratic rule of Eastern rajahs in the past. It is the usurer, not the yeoman, who should be discouraged—first, by the establishment of Land Banks to aid the peasantry; and, secondly, by direct prohibition.

To carry out the intentions of the Bill it may be suggested

that other means could be found. The State is offering a boon, and claims the right to make conditions as to subdivision, letting, and mortgage. Why, then, should not such conditions perpetually apply to the new properties? It might easily be enacted that they are to be for ever immune in these respects: that any usurer who forecloses shall be forced to sell to an actual occupying owner; and that, in cases of undeclared mortgage, he shall have no power to recover: that every holding affected must descend to a single owner, who has no power to let or subdivide; and that he forfeits his right by evading this law, the land reverting to the Crown. It may be said that such a law would be evaded if the State had not an annual opportunity of inquiring into the condition of the land. But the natural heir would always claim sole possession; and the Bill itself provides similar provisions (in clause 49) and machinery for ascertaining the facts (in clause 51). If some legal objection exists, it should be met by a merely nominal charge. As it is, the clause bears a suspicious resemblance to an old scheme, put forward by certain landlords, by which the tenant was to become half owner only of his holding. It would seem inevitable that this irritating tithe-charge—to whomsoever it may be payable—will be swept away; and the length of time over which the annual instalments, and interest, are payable should be thus reduced, so that the average number of years' purchase should be

brought down to about twenty-two years, which is a price at which many tenants have bought under the existing law.

Two minor matters also should be noted, as detailed in clause 59, and in the schedule. The former provides that the Commission may put up to auction any holding on which the instalments are unpaid; and that, if the holding is not sold, they may put any one they nominate in possession. The power so given would not be very liable to abuse, as no one would take such land against the public opinion of the neighbours. But it is objected that the State thus becomes evictor-general in the majority of holdings, and that this would make government more difficult than ever. This view seems hardly sound, because the Commissioners are only to buy when they are reasonably convinced that serious loss is improbable; and, as it is, the State always has to share the odium of eviction, by protecting the officials who carry it out with police, and if necessary with troops. The peasantry are never really bitter against the Government officials, as they are against the evicting landlord, nor will they regard their instalments in the same light as their old rent. Evictions, therefore, will probably be few, and will be acquiesced in by the other owners.

But the schedule, as now drafted, is open to more serious objection, for it graduates the bonus to landlords according to the value of the estate sold. Thus, if the purchase-money does not exceed £5000, the bonus

is at the rate of fifteen per cent on the tenants-holdings' capital value (not including demesne and other land); and this percentage decreases as the purchase-money increases, so that if it amounts to £40,000 the bonus is only five per cent. The intention evidently is that the poor landlord shall get most, and the rich landlord (who will not often sell at all) get least. But the method does not produce the effect intended; for it is well known to those who have acquaintance with Ireland generally that there are cases—especially in the west—of very large “congested” estates, where tenant and landlord are alike poor; but, in these cases, the bonus is reduced because the operation is large, while the poverty of the landlord is apparently unrecognised. If the schedule remains, there should at least be discretionary powers to dispense with the scale in “congested” estates, as there are powers of a like character, reserved to the Lord Lieutenant, in clause 5 of the Bill.

There are three points which are not noticed in the Bill at all—namely, precautions against the creation of new grazing lands; precautions as to inheritance when the small owner remains solvent; and compulsory sale in cases other than those provided for by existing law. Yet these are all very important questions; and, unless they are treated, it seems doubtful whether the measure can be regarded as final, and whether land agitation will cease.

The Bill refers to both agricultural and pastoral land; but it is intended to stay the flow

of emigration, and, as such, it deals mainly with agricultural holdings. If the population is not to dwindle away year by year, the agriculturists, who are thickest on the land, must be protected against the graziers, who require larger tracts, and thus represent a thinner population. The Bill provides that the owner shall be the occupier; but there seems to be no provision to prevent the mortgagee, or others, from getting hold of a batch of agricultural holdings, and then converting them into one large grazing farm, of which the buyer would be sole occupier, his sons being the herds. This surely should be prevented, by a stipulation that such amalgamation is only to be allowed by State sanction. If it is proved that the agricultural population has disappeared, the permission might be granted; but as long as agriculturists remained available, the land ought to be put to the highest use of which it is capable, and clause 50 should not enable any one man to sell up a number of the twenty-acre holdings, and to convert them into a grazing farm. If this were allowed, the final result of the measure might only be to create new landlords, with grazing tenants represented as being labourers only.

There is also a grievance that has been more than once shown, in 'Maga,' to lie at the root of all land agitation during the last ten years or more. In Connaught especially there is a congested population, living in the bogs more miserably—as all experienced observers agree—than any oppressed peasant

in Asia, or any ruined Kaffir in South Africa. These men see—sometimes adjoining their miserable holdings—large tracts of grass-land, belonging to rich landlords who do not themselves use them for stock-raising, but let them out to grazing tenants. In some cases the forebears of the tenants in the bogs used to till parts of this land. But the rich landlord refuses to sell, and will continue to do so—for his bonus would be small, and his prejudices are strong and antiquated. It is not merely a question of trouble in collecting rent, or of expenses in the Land Court, for, if he sold, the new owners would owe him nothing. We can hardly believe, in England or Scotland, what the objection often really is. An Irish lady of good family once told the present writer that when first she went to England she visited a house where from the windows a mill could be seen which was on the landlord's own estate. She could not then understand why he did not pull down what she regarded as an eyesore—namely, a dwelling in sight of the great house itself. But surely, in the twentieth century, sentiments like those of the Boer in South Africa cannot be allowed to interfere with the question of promoting the prosperity of a hardy class of agricultural owners, and thus stanching the flow of emigration. It may be said that the people would be better elsewhere, and should not be allowed to hold on to rocks and swamps; but this is no reason why they should not till lands near them rather than

leave Ireland. Until this question is settled, permanent contentment will not be created.

It may be that Government consider that the increased income of the Congested District Board, and the purchase of estates now ordered to be sold by compulsion, will suffice for these exceptional cases in the west; but the Board will have still to fight its old battle against the obstructive obstinacy of a few rich men. There will certainly be a demand, sooner or later, that the Board shall be strengthened by compulsory powers. It would seem better that these should be now granted, with due safeguards, in cases where the land is really needed by the State and not really needed by the landlord, rather than that there should arise later a new cry for universal compulsion, when men begin to tire of the delays in arranging for voluntary sale and purchase, or find that they cannot get the land in exactly those cases where they need it most.

As to inheritance, it has been already explained in 'Maga' that the weakness and deceit of the owner often leads him to alter his declared intention as to which son is to have the farm. The recent terrible murder of a brother in Clare County was due to jealousy as to the inheritance; and the League lives on such family feuds. If, therefore, the State expects to be paid more than half the instalments by heirs of the first owner, the State may be allowed in every case to demand that the heir be declared. Even after the whole

of the instalments are paid, the same law might be continued as a custom belonging to land so obtained. This would do more for the public peace than any other regulation affecting peasant life.

In conclusion, we may briefly consider what the results of the Act will be. It is difficult to forecast these, but certain facts seem clear. In the first place, voluntary sale by the great landlords is not contemplated by them. The smaller and poorer owners will be glad to sell; the rich will not. The Bill will cause a disappearance of squireens as landlords, though they may remain on their demesnes. It will not unify the tenure of land; for, in addition to landlords and tenants, who will still employ the diminished Land Court to settle rents, there will be large farmers and smaller owners who have bought under existing law, and there will be new tenants established by the new Land Commissioners, and many others who will hold under the new Act by direct agreement with their old landlords.

There are interests assailed which will tell against the Bill. Lawyers will suffer from its summary and cheap procedure. Land Commissioners will fear that their occupation is gone. Labourers will expect less employment than ever. But, above all, land agents, who have already seen that they are doomed, and have demanded compensation by the State, may fight against land purchase. It is not enough to allow them to be agents for the sale, because that is a final task.

Some agents are solicitors; some are themselves landlords; some, who manage the large estates, have already exerted their influence against any sale,—the last class will be little affected; the lawyers will get little pity; the small landlords, who act as agents to one another, have got their bonus. This agitation, therefore, will fail; but it may lead to great delay. The landlord might first be advised not to sell; then the investigation of his position, with respect to title, encumbrances, and superior interests, might drag out the time. It has taken sometimes more than twelve years to arrange a sale when both landlord and tenants were willing. Then, unless the Commissioners are called in, there might be an endless haggling as to price; for which reason it seems that voluntary agreements will not really be the large majority, but that the Commissioners will find their work constantly increasing. After agreement as to price of purchase is reached, the operation of the Bill is swift and simple; but it does not give power to the tenants to force on a sale, and delays can only be prevented by the agents being willing to help the measure.

It is not intended by anything here said to depreciate so large a remedial measure, but only to indicate dangers ahead. No one can really foresee what will come. Ireland will never be entirely prosperous as long as its savings flow mainly into the pockets of bishops and monks. It will always continue to nurse

some pet grievance, and to denounce its rulers. But, for the present at least, we may look forward to a peaceful time of high hopes, and of gratitude even, especially to the King, whose influence, in the belief of the peasantry, has been exerted in their favour, and whose reception, if the Bill is finally adopted by the country,—as with certain modifications it seems likely to be,—is sure to be marked by an outburst of real enthusiasm. The fight in Parliament, in the various stages yet to come, will be stubborn, both on the tenants' side and on that of the landlord. The British taxpayer may even put in an appearance; but, so far, his growls have not been alarming in this matter. The Irish Land Bill marks a great epoch in the history of land tenure, and its effects will be felt, in time, perhaps even outside Ireland itself. It has become recognised, in Europe generally, that agriculture prospers most when—under wise laws and a just Government—the tiller of the land is also its owner. But the Bill is not revolutionary: it is only abreast of its time. The peasant will not wake up on the 1st of November to find himself a landlord, or even a free owner. He will be a tenant for some time yet. But gradually, throughout the land, the Irish yeomen will increase in numbers; the drain of emigration will be diminished; and the prosperity and contentment of Ireland will have been increased by the statesmanship of those who framed the Irish Land Bill of the present year.

THE EARLIEST EXILE OF ST HELENA.¹

BY HUGH CLIFFORD, C.M.G.

IN the early autumn of the year 1512 the indefatigable Alfonso Dalboquerque, the greatest of the many viceroys sent out by Portugal to rule the East, found himself as usual immersed in business, and with at least one devastating little war upon his hands. It was only in the preceding January that he had returned from a semi-punitive, semi-filibustering raid upon Malacca, which had resulted in the triumphant establishment of the Portuguese power in Malaya. On the voyage thence to India he had had the ill-fortune to be shipwrecked by the way with all his company, and to suffer the loss of "the richest spoils that ever were seen since India had been discovered until that moment; and besides this, many women who were greatly skilled workers in embroidery, and many young girls and youths of noble family from all those countries which extend from the Cape of Comorin to the eastward," to quote the author of the 'Commentaries.' For more than three seasons past, too, he had kept one eye cocked on Hormuz and Socotra, while all the time his hands and feet were busy beating out the flames and trampling the embers of conflagration which the aggression of himself and his predecessors had kindled all

along the Coromandel coast. He had actually set out in the direction of the Persian Gulf in the preceding year, leaving a more or less cowed India behind him, when circumstances had forced him to turn away to Malacca; and now on his return to Cochin it was to find the best part of his work wellnigh undone again, through the inefficiency of the lieutenants to whose care, during his absence, it had been intrusted. To crown all, the annual reinforcing fleet, which had left Portugal in March, brought instructions from the king that raised the question of the advisability of abandoning Goa—the conquest upon which, above all others, he prided himself. This latter fact was one which he did not dare divulge to his captains, for at that moment the fortress of Benastarim, which dominated Goa, was in the hands of the Muhammadans, and he feared lest his determination to recover it should be thwarted by those under him if the gist of the royal instructions were to become known. The "great Alfonso," therefore, as the author of the 'Commentaries' loves to call him, had his hands over-full, and enough and to spare of food for anxiety and worry; for indeed the troubled lands over which he ruled resembled nothing so nearly as

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the dry hide which the fakir showed to Alexander, the hide which rose up rebelliously in one quarter as soon as the emperor set foot upon its farther rim.

All these things combined to put Alfonso, who at the best was no gentle knight, into a very evil mood, and among all the minor causes of his rage no one pricked him more shrewdly than the knowledge that within the walls of Benastarim there lurked certain Portuguese deserters, renegade Christians every man of them, who, seeing the lustre of their own cause waning during Dalboquerque's absence in Malacca, or caught, it may be, by the dark hair and saucy eyes of some Muhammadan maiden, had thrown in their lot with the infidel.

Roçalcão, the commander of the fortress, was a faint-hearted leader, and Dalboquerque had little difficulty in arranging for the surrender of the place upon terms very advantageous to the Portuguese; but to one of the enemy's stipulations he long continued to demur. Dalboquerque demanded that the renegades should be delivered up to him unconditionally, but to this Roçalcão would by no means agree. He urged that such a course was contrary to the laws of his country and to the principles of his religion, and in the end only handed the apostates over to his conqueror on the receipt of a promise that their lives should be spared. The great Alfonso, the 'Commentaries' tell us, "could not break his word"; but in spite of

that disability he on this occasion went as near to the accomplishment of that impossibility as a man could well do.

"He commanded them to bring up before him Fernão Lopez and the other renegades," we read. "These men, when they found themselves in his presence, fearing that he would not keep the promise he had made them of sparing their lives, threw themselves at his feet, and with many tears besought him to have mercy upon them. But Alfonso Dalboquerque, who could not break his word, kept the promise which he had made of not taking their lives, according to the promise given to Roçalcão; so he ordered that their right hands, and the thumbs of their left hands, and their ears and noses should be cut off in memory and as a terrible example of the punishment meted out to them for the treason and wickedness which they had committed against God and their king."

Castanheda, who is less jealous of the reputation of the great Alfonso than is the author of the 'Commentaries,' says that, in addition to the above punishment, which as "a memory" was certainly calculated to fix itself in the recollection of the victims, the hairs of the heads and the beards of the wretched creatures were plucked out by the roots, the raw places so caused being smeared with mud. Correa has still more disgusting details to report, and he says that the punishment was spread out over a period of three whole days, and that more than half the renegades died from the effects of the torture.

Such barbarism as this cannot but be highly revolting to our modern humanitarianism; but before the great Alfonso be

condemned in too sweeping a fashion, it is necessary to remember many things. To begin with, far worse treatment than is here described was meted out during the sixteenth century to the natives of the East, often without any excuse of anger, and merely for the purpose of extorting information. In those days the peoples of Europe had not completely emerged from savagery, and the East, alas! has too often had the power to debase the moral standard of the white men who have settled in its midst. It is only another instance of the ineradicable prejudice which holds the person of a European to be more sacred than that of his brown neighbour, that this act of Dalboquerque should have received so much attention, while the barbarities practised upon natives by numberless Portuguese rovers have barely called forth a single protest in contemporary chronicles. With regard to the renegades themselves, the crime of which they stood convicted was, judged by the standards of their age, the blackest which a Christian could commit. The Portuguese, though during the first half of the sixteenth century they poured into Asia in a continuous stream, were able to oppose only paltry numbers to the hordes of the East which they made it their business to subdue. That any member of these slender bands of adventurers should throw his weight into the scale of his fellows' enemies was felt to be an outrage against the white humanity they shared in common. It

was, in the eyes of the Portuguese, as though a man were to head an insurrection of the brute creation against his kind; and since the foemen were Muhammadans, and the Portuguese were a people of the Peninsula, with whom hatred and detestation of the Moor were an inherited tradition, to this appalling crime was added a double treason — treason to God, treason to the king. If the great Alfonso had had the courage of his convictions, and had been somewhat less delicate in the matter of his plighted word, he would have killed the renegades outright, nor would any of his contemporaries have greatly questioned the justification of his action. This, however, he would not do; but the necessity of an example, patent to all eyes, was obvious. Therefore he wreaked his dreadful vengeance upon these men, sending them forth hairless, noseless, earless, maimed in both hands, to be known for all the days of their lives by this awful branding, and when known, to be shunned with horror by the meanest of their kind.

The leader of the renegades, Fernão Lopez, has already been incidentally mentioned, and with his after-history we will now concern ourselves; for this poor wretch, whose very name conveys nothing to the average educated man of our own time, is in some sort to be regarded as the forerunner of the world's greatest exiles. He had experienced in person all that Alexander Selkirk endured a full century and a half before

or to make a mock of his calamities. This desert island, by reason of its utter loneliness, was the only world in which he could live unmolested, and could rule with undisputed sway. The beasts, more kindly than men, would do him no dishonour; more docile than his fellows, they would accept him for their king. Therefore Fernão Lopez, the outcast, looked abroad with an eye suddenly become masterful, saw in the rock upon which he perched the throne of his desires, and felt the glow of satisfaction as he let his eyes roam over the territory which was his own to have and to hold, and to rule withal in such fashion as he listed.

First, with the four fingers that remained to him, and with that sorry stump in which his right arm ended, he set himself to delve in the side of a soft bank of earth until, with infinite toil, he had scooped for himself a cave in which to make his home. Into this he moved the provisions which had been left behind for his use, contending always doggedly with the difficulties added by his maimed members to his solitary labour, and tending his precious fire with constant care both by day and by night, lest by accident it should become extinguished. The haunting fear of being left suddenly without fire was for the moment his only care, his only anxiety, so simple had life become for this man who had won his way out of the turmoil of human existence, and soon, Correa tells us, "he set to work to find stones,

which he beat one against another, and he saw that they struck fire and he kept them." We can see him in fancy sitting intent upon this task, the one stone held between his bare heels, its fellow in the only fingers that remained to him, pushing the tinder into place with the stump of his right arm, and warmed with the triumph of victory when, after numberless failures, the fire at last took hold. Here he was finding in solitude the manhood of which the cruelty of man had robbed him: here he was achieving, conquering, overcoming difficulties, unaided and in spite of all handicaps. Can we wonder if he, who hitherto had failed so grievously, was elated wonderfully by this his first taste of individual success, if he began forthwith to love Nature because she accepted him on equal terms, and while she resisted him, calling forth all his energies, all his ingenuity in the encounter, yet ended by giving him the victory?

Released now from his anxieties anent the extinction of his fire, he was at liberty to inspect his domain, and a new joy must have been his as he wandered through the forests of the sun-steeped vale, viewing all things with the proud glance of the possessor. In the woods he found many "tender herbs which were savoury to eat," and these he boiled with salt, living on them and upon such fish as he had the luck to catch. He had reverted to the condition of primitive man, the which is far from being one of idleness, since

there is no taskmaster so imperative as an empty stomach; but be sure the labour was in itself more delightful than any which had fallen to his lot in the past, because it made a constant call upon his ingenuity and resource, and be sure the food thus won was passing sweet to his taste, since it was the fruit of his own toil, plucked from the island that was his very own, and no such bitter bread as had come to him as the doles of a contemptuous charity.

For a whole year Fernão Lopez lived this life, wandering through his solitudes by day, gazing out with ever-growing satisfaction upon the sea that held no sail, and sleeping at night in his burrow, the mouth of which he guarded with "prickly bushes." But upon a certain day, as he looked seaward, he caught his breath and his heart stood still, for what was that white speck pricking up above the distant horizon to the north? With anxious eyes he watched it, hoping against hope that it might be only a cloud of curious shape; but as the morning advanced it gathered distinctness and increased in bulk. Presently he was unable to delude himself longer. It was a ship under full sail bearing down upon his island, a ship, too, of the people of his own nation. The memory came to him suddenly of all that he had endured at their hands. His maimed fingers rose to those unsightly holes where ears and nose should have been: the healed stump of his arm shot and pricked

with new pain. His eyes, fixed upon the billows of canvas yonder, had lost their look of pride and mastery: they were cowed, abject, fearful. If they should capture him, these Portuguese sailors! The thought flashed through his mind. The ship was outward bound; they would bear him with her back to slavery, back to the unspeakable *inferno* of the East, which had wrecked his manhood and left him the pitiful thing he was! With a great cry of terror he bounded down the hillside, and muttering like one distraught, he plunged into the thickets, wandering on and on to hide himself in the deepest recesses of the woodland. Here he threw himself down and lay panting and oppressed by an awful dread. But little by little he grew calmer. Nature, serene and untroubled, stood about him, shielding him from his enemies. She spoke to him with many voices, and all were reassuring and fearless. She had become no less his friend because he had made of her his servant. She would give him timely warning of the near approach of their common enemy—man! So all that day and the next he lay with her gorgeous mantle of greenery drawn over him, hiding him closely; and when at last he ventured forth, with anxious, peeping face, and limbs braced ready for precipitate flight, behold, the men had gone, and his solitude was his own once more.

In his cave he found certain gifts: biscuits, cheeses, — new cheeses of Portugal,—and many

other things to eat, and a letter "bidding himself not hide himself, but when any ship should touch there he should speak with it, for no one would harm him." I fancy that I can see him, elated suddenly by the reaction from his recent fears, gloating over the good things that lay before him, and chuckling a little to himself at the letter—the first communication which he had held with men for twelve whole months. "No one would harm him," it said. He would have a care that that should prove a true word, but he knew better than to put trust in the promises of men. Nature did not adhere to the letter and violate the spirit as Dalboquerque had done. The kind lap of Nature for him, and not the mercy and honesty of his fellows!

Next, creeping round a promontory to the east, he lay watching the ship getting under weigh, hungrily eager to see her depart and give him back his empty seas; and as she threw out her sails to the wind and began to edge away from the shore, something fell fluttering into the water. The canvas filled and the vessel swept majestically away, leaving a creamy wake astern, but Fernão Lopez had no eyes for her. His gaze was riveted upon that struggling object which the tide was bearing nearer and nearer to him each moment, and at last he made it out to be a cock, with draggled feathers and panting beak, floating helplessly on the surface of the sea. Here was a thing out-

cast like himself, a victim of the callousness of man and the cruelty of fate. He watched its agony with a poignant sympathy, or it may be with a sudden recollection of what a tasty morsel a roast fowl would be to a palate long unused to flesh meats; and at last, plunging into the sea, careless of detection by the men on board the vessel, he caught the half-dead creature as best he might in his maimed arms, and so brought it safe to land.

Resisting the temptation to make a meal of his prisoner, Lopez carried it to his cave, dried it at his fire, and fed it with some rice which was among the stores that the ship had left to him; and since nothing quickens love more wonderfully than a sense of favours conferred upon its object, the man and the cock soon became the dearest of friends. "The cock," Correa says, "became on such loving terms with him that it followed him wherever he went, would come at his call, and at night it roosted with him in the hole." And thus love, of a sort, came into the life of this lonely man, the love of and for a creature which owed him everything, to which he, the outcast, played the part of an omnipotent and beneficent providence. I picture him to myself sitting in the sunshine at the mouth of "the hole," or roaming through the woods in search of the "sweet herbs," with the cock perched at his side or following obedient at his heels,—an outlandish couple, the man crippled and gnarled, the bird dismally be-

draggled, as befits a fowl which has been long cooped on board a ship, and has thereafter suffered grievously in an encounter with the waves. Yet I fancy that each was happy after his fashion—the one, because he had found something to love, something weaker than himself to protect and shield from harm; the other, because the firm earth was very good to peck and scratch and strut upon after the miseries of the ship's hen-coop, and because he felt the man to be a friend and comrade with whom he was safe. They had long talks together, I doubt not, Fernão Lopez and his cook, the man telling again and again the story of his victories gained over the Nature he had bound to his service, the bird listening with his head cocked wisely, or voicing his sympathy in a lusty crow of approval.

More months passed, swelled into years, and the years were added each to each until near a decade had come and gone, and still Fernão Lopez lived on in solitude upon the island of St Helena, and hid himself from sight whenever a sail on the horizon warned him of the coming of his countrymen. And Nature proved a loyal friend, for so long as he trusted to her he remained safe from pursuit. The hole which he had scooped for himself in the bank became one of the stock sights to the Portuguese mariners who plied to and fro upon the ocean highway; and though its owner never suffered himself to be seen while men were abroad in his kingdom, his fame spread

far and wide, and came at last to the ears of the King of Portugal. He therefore sent a letter to Fernão, promising him safe-conduct if he would return to his fatherland; but the exile had learned to put not his trust in princes or in any of the children of men. Yet about this time an intruder broke in upon his solitude. From one of the ships that touched at St Helena a Javanese slave-boy made his escape, hiding himself in the woods and baffling his pursuers. Fernão found this youth when the ship had gone upon her way, and I expect that it was with no great pleasure that he saw his long *tête-à-tête* with his beloved cock interrupted by this unlooked-for visitor. Albeit he was maimed, Fernão Lopez was still a white man, and a white man of the sixteenth century, who regarded all brown folk as children of the devil pre-ordained to slavery and to subjection, wherefore it is probable that he treated the Javanese youngster with less kindness than he had shown to the half-drowned fowl, and was all the more tyrannical in his usage of him because he held stored in his memory the wrongs which he had himself endured, and the thought of the sneers with which in the East natives had been wont to mock his deformities. Moreover, by this time Lopez had been long enough upon the island to get well set in his groove, to love the solitude which had given to him his only experience of liberty and of power, and therefore any

change must needs have been distasteful. It must have irked him sorely to see this brown man, whom fate had thrust upon him, making free with *his* forests, trying to snare *his* birds and fish, even jostling the pampered cock, it may be, and generally comporting himself with the insolence and arrogance of man in the heart of this shrine of Nature, wherein Lopez was the high priest and in some sort the presiding deity. The restlessness of this human creature, too, must have got upon the nerves of one who had lived so long alone with inanimate things or with the wild creatures of the woods; and it is safe to infer that the Javanese slave-boy had a somewhat sorry time of it, and often longed to find himself back on board the ship which he had quitted. In pursuance of this desire he declared himself to the crew of the first vessel which touched at the island, giving himself up, and consenting to discover the place where the white man lay in hiding. He had many scores to pay off against Fernão Lopez doubtless; but it is none the less difficult to forgive his treachery, though it is said that the captain of the ship terrified him by threats, for the Portuguese were curious to see in the flesh the man whose name and story were on every tongue.

Led by the Javanese, therefore, Pero Gomez Teixeira, the captain aforesaid, went with a party of his people into the woods to the spot where Lopez was concealed, and effected his capture. "And when he found

that he was taken he made loud outories, thinking that they were going to take him on board;" for now he had fallen once more into the hands of his compatriots, and saw his peace wantonly broken through the agency of the only thing that he could not trust, his inveterate enemy—man. "But Pero Gomez consoled him," we are glad to read, "and talked for a long time with him, and assured him that he would not carry him away, and gave him many things, although he did not care for them, but very earnestly besought him to take the youth with him in the ship. Pero Gomez, therefore, took him, on receiving a promise from Lopez that he would not hide himself from the crews. And when this had been agreed to, Pero Gomez left him with a paper, signed and sealed, wherein he desired all captains who might touch there of their kindness not to use any force in desiring to carry him to Portugal against his will, for it was from fear of this that Fernão Lopez used in bygone times to hide himself. Therefore he gave him a safeguard in the king's name, and swore to it, that no one should carry him away from the island against his will."

But I suspect that the safeguard was of less value to Fernão Lopez, the man who had gone forth so completely from among the ranks of his fellows that he had ceased to "care" for presents of white men's gear, than was the promise that the Javanese youth should forthwith be removed, for this was a gift indeed, since it gave

him back a no less prized possession than his solitude. Here we have a picture of the man to whom loneliness with Nature has become a necessity, and no one perhaps who has not himself experienced isolation, and learned to love, not hate it, will sympathise as I do with the exile's keen desire to be left quite alone once more.

From this time forward Lopez was somewhat less shy with the crews of passing ships, though he probably watched them come with regret, as unwelcome interruptions to his peace, and saw them go upon their way with very genuine relief. But this renewed intercourse with his compatriots would seem to have recalled to his recollection the teachings of the religion in which he had been reared, for after some years he determined to visit Europe for the purpose of obtaining absolution for his sins. What this resolution must have cost him, what the pang of uprooting must have been to him, it is not easy to estimate; and nothing short of the unquestioning faith in the teachings of his Church, which cropped up so constantly and in such unlooked-for quarters among the Portuguese of the sixteenth century, would have sufficed to nerve him for the effort. Many times, it may be, his heart failed him at the last moment, and he watched ships depart and then went back to "the hole," feeling that it was beyond his power to quit it. But conscience, which, though it makes cowards of us all, endows a few of us here and

there with a courage that is not our own, in the end prevailed. So Fernão Lopez, the outcast, who had reinstated himself in the opinions of men by the appeal which the solitary life he had led for so many years made to their imaginations, was taken on board a homeward-bound vessel, and was carried over the sea to Portugal.

But a blended fear and dislike of his kind had become by now a veritable obsession. The noise and clamour of the busy port affrighted, jarred him, who was used to the great murmuring silence of his desert island. The hurry, the energy, the rush, and the strife of the strenuous life around him dismayed and irked him, and set him yearning after the solitude that had been his, and after the only spot on earth in which he had been able to find peace. Therefore he disembarked by stealth, and lay hidden from the sight of prying eyes in the house of the captain of his ship, and afterwards "went by night to converse with the king and the queen, who gave him a hermitage and a house of friars wherein he might remain; but he would accept nought of this, but obtained permission of the king and went to Rome."

"A hermitage and a house of friars," indeed, were things little suited to the taste of one who had found even the company of a single Javanese slave-boy too much for him. His notions concerning solitude were not those of other men. The very thought of the holy friars welcoming him as a guest

whose coming made a delightful break in the monotony of their lives, plying him, perhaps, with the questions of eager curiosity, and marvelling at his mutilations and at his experiences, were enough in itself to drive him mad. Of course he would have nought of it, for his one desire was to return to his island as soon as the business which had driven him forth from it should be despatched. This was the confession of his sins, and why a visit to Rome should have been necessary requires a word or two of explanation.

Priests of the Roman Catholic Church are given faculties for the shriving of penitents who make confession to them; but there are certain sins which are called "reserved cases," and for which no ordinary priest or bishop has authority to grant absolution. In quite recent times the hearing of the confessions of those who stood self-convicted of sins coming under this category was delegated by the Pope to one or more of his cardinals, but in the sixteenth century the Pope frequently heard such confessions in person. A high platform was erected in one of the transepts of St Peter's, with steps leading up to it on every side, and upon this dais the Pope, or the cardinal to whom he had delegated his powers, took his seat in the sight of all the people. Then, one by one, the penitents, bowed down by the consciousness of sin wellnigh unforgivable, climbed the steep stair, and, kneeling at the feet of the Vicar of Christ, sobbed out the

story of their transgressions. The folds of the long robe of the Pope would be thrown about them to shield them from curious eyes, and when the solemn words of absolution had been uttered, the penitents would step down lightly into the crowd, as Christian stepped when he had cast his burden. It was a pious practice of many charitable people, both men and women of unblemished character, to present themselves with the real penitents on these occasions, to cover their shame and to hide from the curious who were the guilty ones and who the innocent. But this kindly fraud can have availed nothing in the case of Fernão Lopez: the terrible mutilations which no artifice could conceal told their own tale all too distinctly.

This scene used to be enacted during Holy Week in each year, and to the high platform in the transept of St Peter's Fernão came one Maundy Thursday to cleanse his soul from sin. His was the double crime of apostasy and of taking up arms for the infidels against a Christian people, and only absolution pronounced by the Pope himself could give to his troubled spirit the peace he sought. This had been the incentive which had driven him forth from his island; this penitent's scaffold, reared high above the sea of upturned faces, the end of his pilgrimage, the object of his long journey. Painfully, with his marred face pale and drawn, his hairless head uncovered, his maimed hand and arm visible to all, he clambered

up the steep stairs, and, throwing himself on his knees, poured out the story of his sins in such broken speech as his long silence had left to him. Then a kind arm was cast about his shoulders, the Pope's white mantle covered him, a great peace came to him through his strong faith, and to the kneeling multitude around there seemed to sound a distant echo of the joy in heaven at one poor sinner doing penance.

Thereafter the Pope gave him audience, and asked him to name the boon he most desired; but Fernão Lopez had but a single wish in life, and but a single fear. He longed to return to St Helena and to solitude; he feared lest the King of Portugal should detain him in Europe. So he showed his heart to the Pope, and the latter "gave him letters to the king that he would send him back again to the island. This likewise the king performed."

So Fernão Lopez, light of conscience at last, won his way safely to St Helena, a king come back to his own again. He was fearless now, even of men, though he had little use for their company. And "as time went on," Correa tells us, "he would show himself and converse with the people of the ships which passed by, and all gave him things to plant and to sow, so that he cultivated a great many gourds, pomegranates, and palm-trees, and kept ducks, hens, sows, and she-goats with young, all of which increased largely, and all be-

came wild in the woods"; for this man, who had himself suffered tyranny of so fearful a sort, used his power over the brute creation sparingly. And here he died in 1546, after nearly twenty years of solitary life.

It is good to think of him in these latter times passing his days amid the scenes and in the fashion which had become dear to him, freed from care and from the twinges of his conscience, and ruling in kindly ways the creatures which were his subjects in this little world which was his very own. Perhaps, when roaming through the woods, he chanced once in a while upon the very spot which was destined long years after to be the narrow prison of a far greater exile, and, standing there, looked out over the land and sea, the possessions which satisfied his every ambition. If so, what a contrast is presented by the minds of these two outcasts!—the one who had failed so woefully, and yet in the end had attained to so splendid a success because he had touched happiness and contentment,—because his every desire had been granted: the other, who had reached heights of individual achievement never equalled before or since, who yet was fated, like Fernão Lopez, to end his days upon the little island of St Helena, but, unlike him, was doomed to rage in impotence, to eat out his mighty angry heart with foiled ambitions tearing him, as the eagles tore at Prometheus on his rock.

THE CAPITALIST AS CRITIC.

(Lines to the New Arbiter of our Studies.)

GREAT Learning's patron! Harsh Helleniphobe,
 And latter Phœbus of this obscure globe;
 Mild male Astræa Redux, who amid
 The stars—and stripes—of Commerce long wast hid;
 Steel-staunch foundation of the Age of Stocks,
 Prometheus, Saturn, Numa, and John Knox
 Welded in one great shape by wizard fusion,
 I sing—but oh! such classical allusion
 Will pain the soul whom I desire to praise.
 Shall we, oh Muse, forget the strenuous days
 When your great Theme forsook his Trust to show
 That Aristotle didn't really know?
 Are we oblivious that he learnt by rote
 The pensive page of Liddell and of Scott,
 Found Hesiod vulgar, Homer crapulous,
 And couldn't bear the slang of Æschylus?
 Oh toiling scholarship! Great Mind! that knew
 Herodotus immoral,—worse, untrue!
 Oh splendid insight, spilling the last lees
 Of merit yet allowed Euripides!
 Not yours to think—as even Walkley might—
 Medea as fair as Julia washed white;
 Not yours to see—as Beerbohm e'en may see—
 In Attic groves the seed that makes a Tree.
 Nay, you know better! But, when Phillips wrote
 An Odyssey that shook the grave of Grote;
 When damned Prometheus made the scholar stare,
 And Cockney couplets hurt th' Olympian air;
 When English painters of some Grecian scene
 Daubed *salve* on the threshold-stone,—ah! then
 Did you not smile to find that even Art
 Turned foe to scholarship—and took your part?

Not yours to watch the spurious lights that blind
 A Jebb's, a Jowett's, or a Porson's mind;

You're for Modernity! You know the worth
Of statues, poems, sculpture,—all that Earth
Devised in her Dark Ages, as a child
Carved foolish toys, weaved fictions that beguiled
The careless hours away, until it reached
The age of reason, and was birched, and breeched.
You're for Modernity! of course you're right;
You know the past's archaic, like last night;
One Asche is worth ten Vulcans in a forge;
Great Alexander's not a patch on George;
'Tis but to give the knight a kind of foil
That you match Lucan with Sir Conan Doyle.
As for philosophers! you pierced their gloom,
Comparing them with Adam Smith or Hume,—
Found logic lacking in Democritus,
Heard Epicurus didn't work, and thus
Was obviously a pig; Empedocles
You soon unmasked; you showed up Socrates;—
Proved all the pearls of Plato to be sham,
And damned the ancients in an epigram.

Well done, Great Sir! Quite soon, I understand,
Schools of Finance will soar in every land;
The puking babe will mewl of bulls and bears,
And nurseries echo lisp of stocks and shares;
Wives will be partners; lovers, when they meet,
Will kiss and tell of subtle slumps in wheat;
Already wane the hoar philosophies,
The dissolute, dishonoured classic dies,
And Oxford opes at last her owlsh eyes.

Great Sir, well done! I own with all my heart
The Stoa has no chance against the Mart;
The wealth of poesy compares but ill
With the bright product of the Patent Pill;
And tragic drama, even at its best,
Can rarely be put out at interest.
The Greeks, I own too, wrote o'ermuch by half,
But then, you know, they had no telegraph;
They *had* to be immortal, wretched men!
You miss my meaning, worthy Sir? Nay, then,

I only ask, compare with Sophocles
 Electric Rudyard's cabled harmonies.
 Proved then,—the books of Greece are less than dust;
 As to Greek life,—Great Sir! how wise, how just
 Your venom'd sneer, your barbed oxymoron!
 'Tis true the slight affair at Marathon
 Seems at first glance to touch the skirt of fame,
 Yet do we know the grand contractor's name
 Who forged the victor's steel? Herodotus
 (Another forger) won't enlighten us;
 But we should find him, if dead lips could speak,
 No vile barbarian,—I mean, no Greek.
 What fables too! Of course, the Persian's doom
 Was wrought in the suborned historian's room;
 Thermopylæ is but a solar myth;
 Ionic luxury and Doric pith
 Exemplify the sort of similes
 That please the silly minds of savages.
 Nay! though they fought—as e'en barbarians must—
 Their trust in steel was never a steel trust;
 Theirs was a vulgar method, lacking yet
 The devilish science of a war in wheat.
 And their great men! blown bladders, swollen bags
 Of bombast that your phrase has slit to rags!
 Weigh Pericles, High Justice! When did he
 Create a corner, float a company?
 Who cares for him? Beyond great Morgan's main
 In neat New York, or here in prim Park Lane,
 Sits the new Pericles our age admires,
 The Rubber King, Prince of Pneumatic Tyres!

Why should I curse the Greeks? My ardour cools:
 You know the Classics, Sir, and know them fools.
 But now when happy mills supplant the trees,
 And Pierpont, not Poseidon, sways the seas;
 Now, when all useless beauties faint and fail,
 And we go bald, and read the 'Daily Mail,'
 Now, when the Comic Muse's bleaching bones
 Are re-articulated by a Jones;
 Now, when the awful truths of sages seen
 Are commonplace to girls, however green;

Now in this Age of Gold—or Scrip—oh! spare
The stupid Past! Pity's the only wear,
Complacent scorn. He fights with wind who seeks
To beat the bones of unenlightened Greeks.
They're dead, Great Sir, quite dead! The *coup-de-grâce*
Was your swift brilliant phrase. Behold! they pass
Where other odd, superfluous brutes have gone,—
The Irish Elk, the mighty Mastodon,
The Ichthyosaurus, snoozling in the chalk,
The Liberal clique, the obsolescent Auk.

Great champion! your work is ended well.
It may awaken rancour,—who can tell?
But, Sir, I know how quickly, if you please,
Your power may crush pedantic enmities:
Should some dull scholar venture to intrude
His view, in Popian couplets veiled and crude,
When next your pen essays this lofty style,—
Give him a library—and leave to smile.

ST JOHN LUCAS.

THE WINNING OF ELIZABETH FOTHERGILL.

BY U. L. SILBERRAD.

I. THE WINNING.

It was at the Fox and Grapes that the affair began. There, one wet evening in October, came Will Gifford, he to whom Elizabeth Fothergill was bound by a promise of marriage. This Gifford, though selected by old Fothergill before his death as the man to take Elizabeth and her farm, was not of the highest reputation—at least not in London, where he was known: hereabouts people were not so well acquainted with him. On this particular evening he came to the Fox and Grapes, meaning to spend the night there and go on his way the next day. To the inn likewise there came a young gentleman who was also passing through the town. The two of them got to conversation and afterwards to cards—a thing which not infrequently happened in the company of Gifford, who earned more by gaming than by any known work. Those who were acquainted with him in London were not so ready to play with him; but the young gentleman, by reason of his rawness and the dulness of the unfashionable place, was eager and willing, and soon they were deep in piquet.

There was some company present, but mostly of the substantial and commoner sort,

more interested in talking of their stock or merchandise than in concerning themselves in the fleecing of any youth. Thus it happened that the two played almost unobserved for some time. But after a while there entered one who was not known to the stout men by the stove, and who, it seemed, had neither share nor interest in their talk. He crossed the room and sat down by the window embrasure where Gifford and the youth were at play. Gifford glanced at him, trying, by his wide knowledge of the world's byways, to judge what sort he might be. His clothing was plain and shabby,—indeed, from that one might well take him to be an artisan; but his lithe figure and gait, easy and tireless as a wolf-hound, seemed to deny it. His face gave little index to his calling,—it was lean and swarthy, and tanned by many winds and suns; but the mouth, crooked and whimsical, did not look like a soldier of fortune; and the eyes, keen as a hawk's, were not those of a mountebank.

This man, whoever he might be, sat and watched the play a while. At last he turned away, as if he were weary of the monotony of Gifford's luck, and, drawing a small table towards him, began a game of

his own. The youth had his back that way, and was, besides, too eager with his own affairs to notice; but Gifford could see well, and, finding his present prey so easy as to need little skill, he had leisure to observe. The swarthy man had taken a pack of Bohemian cards from his pocket; with them he played the curious, intricate game that was played by the wandering people before the gay pasteboards were known to the Courts of Europe. Gifford had heard rumours both of the game and the cards, but had never seen either before; and he watched with all the attention he could spare, becoming momentarily more and more interested.

At last that which was bound to happen took place—the young gentleman lost all he had with him to lose. Gifford made it a rule never to play for promises with chance players in chance places, so their game came to an end. But before many more minutes were past he had challenged the new-comer. The swarthy man looked up, but refused courteously; he seemed to prefer his own solitary game. Gifford seated himself at the opposite side of the table and watched. The man played deliberately, yet, it would seem, with skill. Gifford observed his hands as he played,—the skin toughened as if from working with heat, yet the fingers very sensitive and the muscles extraordinarily strong.

But the observer was too truly a gamester to be long content to look on merely; so

soon he picked up the king of hearts, which in the Tarot cards are represented by cups.

"'Tis a strange, heathenish pack," said he.

"Of foreign make," the other answered.

"So I should have guessed," Gifford said. "I know nothing of such pretty things, though with the common sort I can do something. What say you, —when your problem is all worked out, shall we play a little to pass the time? Name your game—piquet, ombre, what you will."

This time the other did not refuse, and when his game was brought to an end he declared himself happy to oblige. Instantly, before the Tarot pack was well cleared away, Gifford had the other cards on the table, and the candles snuffed and well placed. Then the two of them set seriously to play ombre, for that was the game the stranger approved.

For an hour they played, with never a word spoken but what appertained to the game. For that hour, though the play was close, the stakes were small. It would seem that the swarthy man was poor and had little with him to risk, for, with his consent, the stakes increased as he won—as win he did with a deadly persistence.

Gifford moistened his lips and glanced furtively at his antagonist; then he called for wine and more light. "It's dark as hell," he said, and looked at the other as if he thought he had guidance

for his play from the nether world.

But the swarthy man showed no resentment, though he refused to drink when the wine was brought. "I am like the beasts that perish," said he, "and only drink when I am thirsty, and then water for choice."

Gifford drained his glass. "Tis cheap, anyhow," he sneered.

"It is so," the other answered, and shuffled the cards.

The men by the stove still talked of their cattle and business—at least the most of them did: one, younger than the others, but a stout and worthy farmer, had drawn nearer. Little had been said, hardly a word he could have heard, nevertheless something of the excitement of play had been communicated to him, and so brought him to join the young gentleman who, aroused from his misfortunes, had begun sullenly to watch the game.

By this time both players were absorbed again, and there was no sound but the soft flitter-flutter of the cards as they fell in the candle-light and the chink of money that changed owners. The play was higher, but close as before. Luck smiled one way or luck smiled the other, or maybe the smiles were helped a little by the gamester who had won earlier that evening; but always the end was the same, he lost and lost and lost again. Did the cards frown on him, then his opponent played recklessly and won but by a shave; did the cards

smile, then the swarthy man played with care and won again. And if Gifford by some trick courted the favour that seemed otherwise denied him, still the other was equal to it, though he never cast a doubt on the play.

The sweat broke out on the gamester's brow: he played desperately, plunging at random, and the other won; he played falsely, with a falsity so keen a player should have observed, but never a word did his opponent say, only he forestalled him and won again.

Gifford shifted the candles with hands that twitched so that the flame went all askant and the grease ran down. "You to deal," he muttered, and the youth looking on thought he said "Curse you"; but no one took any heed.

The men by the fire began to move: those that lived near set off for their homes, muffling their throats, and breathing spiced cordial as they said their good nights; those who had come from a distance, and must be early astir on the morrow, called for their candles—twenty fortunes lost at cards would not keep them from their proper rest. Soon there was left only the two who played and the two who looked on. In the smoky room there was no light but in the embrasure where they sat, and no sound but the shuffle and flutter of the cards as they fell. Gifford drank once and drank again, and once the other snuffed the candles. Higher and higher the stakes were raised. Fast the gay

pasteboards fell, then slow for caution and fast again for wrath. An oath muttered here, a trap set there, a taunt, a threat, a mutter of rage; but the end was the same, the swarthy man won and won, till it seemed the devil himself must guide his play.

"Curse you!" Gifford cried at last; "I thought it was a man I asked to play, not a hound from hell!" and he flung the last coins across the table.

The other picked them up. "From that I take it you have no more to lose."

"You lie!" Gifford retorted. "But I do not choose to play more with you; I am used to playing with honest gentlemen."

"More honest than wise, perhaps."

Gifford turned about sharply. "Do you insult me?" he asked, with his hand on his sword.

The other smiled. "No, friend; I could not," said he. He slipped the pack of cards through his hand. "Then you play no more to-night?" he asked. "It surprises me that you played so long, seeing that it was but a losing game, and the stakes at the end were high—too high for a man who plays to win."

The silly youth laughed here, but the farmer kept grave; he knew they were near the edge of things. Gifford sat down in his chair again. "Put that back," he commanded, pointing to the money that the other was beginning to sort. "Put it all back, and, by the power of God! we will play one game

more. A worthy game it shall be. We will have no paltry ones and twos; the winner takes all. You shall put all you've won upon it, and I will put Elizabeth Fothergill, her house, and dower."

The swarthy man went on dividing the moneys. "I do not know that I have any use for Elizabeth Fothergill, her house, and dower," he said.

The landlord had twice come to them as they sat over their cards, and twice he had been sent about his business. The last time he had gone no farther than the stove, where he had sat down, fearful lest some quarrel should arise. Now he rose hastily. "Sirs, sirs," said he. "Surely this has gone far enough!"

But the youth cried out that he was a spoil-sport, and Gifford, after he had, with an oath, bade him hold his tongue, turned back to his opponent.

"You are not a married man?" he asked. "Well, then, know that the man who weds Elizabeth Fothergill has but to hang his hat behind the door and do nothing for the rest of his life. She is a decent figure of a woman, too, and almost as much bound to me by her old father as if the wedding-ring were already on. She is mine to dispose of, and, by heaven! I'll put her upon the game!"

"Dear sirs!" the landlord again entreated.

But Gifford disregarded him. "I will set her in writing," he sneered, "and put her on the table, since it seems you know so little of honesty."

"I know so much of dis-

honesty," the other answered, "that I would sooner have it so."

Gifford called for pen and paper, and the landlord fetched them. Then the document was drawn up, and witnessed by mine host, protesting, and the youth eagerly, the farmer insisting on adding his scrawl too. Then it was put on the table, the candles snuffed afresh, and the cards dealt.

From the very first it was plain to the farmer, who had watched the play so long, that the swarthy man would win again. Fortune had not favoured him particularly in the disposal of the cards, nevertheless the watcher felt sure Gifford would not keep Elizabeth Fothergill and the rules of fair play likewise. So, since he doubted his readiness to lose the one, he set himself to see that he kept the other; for, though but a yeoman, he loved fair play, and meant to see it. The youth pressed eagerly to the table too; the landlord also hovered near, but that from fear of some mischief done, not from any interest in the affair. So they three looked on while the pair played the longest game that yet had been. It was slow, for the swarthy man did not win easily with one coup, as it is likely he could. Rather point by point, each time bettering Gifford by a little, till, from exultation and confidence in his victory, the poor wretch came gradually to a feeling as of a net cast about him—an escape which seemed possible, but was just beyond his reach. His face grew livid, with ugly

splotches of colour upon it; his hand shook, and once he muttered a curse, and once he muttered that the devil was in it.

"Ay," the stout farmer made answer, "your play smacks of him, master; there's more than a flavour of the Father of Lies in it."

Gifford turned furiously upon him. "Do you speak to me, clodhopper?" he cried. "By the body of God! I'll teach you!"

He lunged forward as he spoke; but the landlord, fearing an affray, intercepted him, and entreated him to be calm.

"Play the game out," the youth cried. "Slit his throat afterwards, man, but play the game out first!" and he pulled Gifford's sleeve.

Mine host took the farmer by the arm at the same minute, and, leading him a step away, began saying something in his ear. Gifford glared after him, then at his opponent, who sat composedly waiting, his two last cards in his hand. "Deal with him afterwards," the youth at his elbow urged; "'tis a shame to spoil so fine a game for a fool."

Gifford sat down again, and the game which was to decide Elizabeth Fothergill's husband was played out, the farmer, held in reluctant converse by mine host, missing the last of the play. But before the end he raised his voice above the landlord's conciliatory tongue. "By the Lord! he played false—he played false with the king—I'll swear it!"

"And I," the swarthy man said, as he laid down his last

card. "But it is of no consequence, since it has not helped him to keep either his money or his lady—which both, honourable sir,"—and he bowed to

Gifford, as he took up the trick,—"it seems, are mine by the fortune of play."

After that there was something of an uproar.

II. THE WAITING.

News travels fast without the aid of posts: it was not so late on the morrow that Elizabeth Fothergill heard of the doings at the Fox and Grapes. The tale came to her in scraps, making together a pretty piece of news: her name, it seemed by this, had been bandied about in a pot-house brawl, her fair fame staked on the throw of the dice, and herself, her hand and dower, lost by Will Gifford to a man unknown. So ran the tale; but how much truth it had she could not be sure, so she sent Nan, the nurse, to find out

It was late in the day when Nan came back to her fosterling's farm: it was two miles to the town, and she was old, and so had been bound to stay and rest with her gossip before she set out home again. Now, however, as twilight fell she came hurrying back. Elizabeth sat in the kitchen, where the firelight danced and the shadows of hams and herbs and onion-strings looked like old men that bobbed on the ceiling beam. A door stood open at the farther end; through it one could see the dairymaids still hard at work, though not too busy to nod their heads together now and then as they peeped at the figure that sat proud and straight by the fire.

By-and-by in came Nan, still cloaked and bonneted. "Oh, dear!" and "Oh, bless me!" the dairymaids heard, and "It's a weary way and the roads are bad!" Then as if to spite them the door was shut between, and they heard no more.

Nan had plumped herself down in the elbow-chair—"Oh, my poor dearie!" she said, "it's a sad, sad world!"

"Then the tale is true?" Elizabeth asked.

The old nurse nodded her head. "In part," she said, then she broke out into exclamations. "Oh, the good-for-nothing man! The heathen, heartless knave!" and so forth.

Elizabeth gave but little heed; at last, however, she asked, "Who is the man?"

But that was more than Nan could say. "And Thomas of the Long Farm could not tell either," said she, "though he was there and saw the whole. He says the fellow was of no condition, but a master with the cards and wondrous strong in the arm, as was shown when they came to settle things after."

Elizabeth's eyes glittered as she looked at the fire. "So they fought for me in their cups as well as played for my farm," she said.

The old woman shook her

head drearily. "It's a rare bad world," sighed she.

But she had picked up more gossip from Thomas, who had been witness last night, and it was not likely she could keep it all to herself. "The stranger man was of a gipsy sort, Thomas thought, but he was off betimes in the morning, and Thomas did not know which way he went. He was black to look at, and strange in his ways, drinking but water and playing some fortune-teller's game by himself with heathenish cards of his own providing." She paused: but this account of her husband that was to be brought forth no remark from Elizabeth; so after a little the old woman fell to shaking her head again. "It's a bad business," said she with sorrowful relish, "and a bad husband you'll have, too, I fear me. He's a spendthrift, that's clear: though he won a deal from Will Gifford he gave the most part to a young gentleman in the house that same night—there's for you! Lightly come, lightly go,—'tis always so."

"Why did he do it?" Elizabeth asked.

"Will had earlier won it from the young gentleman," Nan told her. "Thomas said the play was not fair. I know nought of such pothers, but Thomas was clean against your man for giving the money: he says what's the world comin' to if we are to ask how folks get the money we earn? If we earn it fair it's all we've got to do—and enough too for most. I fear, dearie, your man's but a fool."

"And Will, it is clear, was a knave," so Elizabeth answered. Then, after a moment, she said, "See now, all the countryside will be talking of this: let them talk, and set them right on nothing! I doubt not we shall have the winner here soon enough. Till then—ay, and afterwards—we will tell our neighbours nothing."

Nan agreed, though it did not please her over-well, except that at that rheumatic season of the year it was not so easy to get about. Soon after the old woman toddled away, and for a moment Elizabeth stood alone, looking into the fire, her mouth set hard and her eyes shining. The winner would be here soon enough; and she—his winnings would receive him. She did not think to repudiate the bargain,—indeed, were he a man of will, she knew it were wellnigh impossible for her to do it, though the law might give her power; but she could make him think twice before he took the bargain over. She smiled grimly as she thought of the man of no condition who would come gaily to take over Will Gifford's contract—to hang his hat behind her door, wed his chattel bride, and master the farm. Let him do it if he would, let him come to-day if he chose. Doubtless he would come to-day, to-morrow at the latest.

But he did not. That day passed, and the next, and the man of no condition did not come. The girls talked among themselves, wondering if indeed the tale could be true, since nothing had come of it.

Elizabeth said nothing, but looked more severely to the ways of her household, keeping the chattering maids well occupied, but in her heart there was black anger. She had been angry when she thought of the man who had won her at play coming gaily post-haste to take possession, without pause for decorum or by your leave. But she was more angry still when she thought of him tarrying, as if the bargain were not even worth coming to view.

She was in this state of mind when on Sunday came Tobiah the Dissenter to the farm. Elizabeth, in the pride of her heart and her desire to show the congregation she was ashamed of nothing, had walked to the meeting-room in the town; Tobiah, seeing her there, had thought fit to say he would dine at her house that day. She could not refuse the honour; indeed she had no wish to, and the good man walked home with her. Tobiah had not thus invited himself because he had a great appreciation of her person or her dinner, though the one was more than tolerable and the other likely to equal it. The reason was a desire to find out the truth of the rumours he had heard; for Elizabeth, though she did not always attend meeting, was a member of the flock, and, being young and deprived of both parents, Tobiah perceived plainly that it was his duty to see into this matter of hers. Accordingly he walked home with her and asked the truth of the tale. She, after a moment's con-

sideration, told him what she knew.

The good man was very wroth: the sin of gaming was great in his eyes, and money, lands, and gear won at cards he held to be no better than stolen. "This man has no power over you whatsoever," said he; "he has no better right to your body, soul, or land than I. When he comes here, thinking to take possession, send to me and I will come and speak with him: it is a matter in which the spirit is likely to give me forcible utterance."

Elizabeth seemed to agree, but did not give any promise: she privately thought it was a matter in which her own spirit would be able to give her utterance without help from Tobiah. The Dissenter was not entirely deceived by her manner, and for that reason, and in case she should forget to send for him, he determined to come that way again when the weather was fair.

A day or two after Tobiah chanced to meet the very man who had been so much in his mind since Sunday. It was a fine and perfect autumn day. Tobiah had gone far into the country: towards afternoon, as he passed down a narrow lane, he heard the ring and clink of metal, and a man's voice singing joyously between the rhythm of the hammer-strokes,—

"For Thy goodly glory, Lord,
For Thy mercy unto me,
For the richness of the present,
Whatso'er the future be,—
Hear me, Master, when I thank Thee;
all my thanks are due to Thee!"

So the voice, which was like a lark's for beauty, sang, and Tobiah stopped to listen. The way was lonely, and the *ring, ring, ring* of the little hammer blows, which kept time musically with the singing, was a strange sound to hear in such a place.

The Dissenter went on a little looking for the singer, but it was not till he rounded the bend of the road that he sighted him. There was a small bit of common land here beside the way, shut in on two sides by high hedges, and sheltered at the back by trees, now gorgeous in their autumn dress. Beneath these trees a man was seated hard at work. He had built a little furnace of clay, such as the Bohemians and all the wandering blacksmiths in the world build. At this he was very busy fashioning something. Old kettles and pots and such household things lay beside him, showing plainly that he was a tinker and mender by trade; but now he was not at his trade,—instead he was fashioning a fire-basket of the finest workmanship. Tobiah stood a moment watching him in the blue fume of the smoke, as now in silence he twisted and shaped the stubborn metal with wondrous skill. When, as he finished some little piece to his will, he thrust the cooling metal back into the fire, he broke out into song again—

“For the work that Thou hast given,
For the joys of toil and strife,
For the labours of the daytime,
For the struggles of my life,—
Hear me, Master, when I thank Thee.”

The voice rang full and triumphant, with a lust of living and a joy of strife that, strange to say, woke some echo in Tobiah, who, it must be admitted, was not averse to a brush with the devil—or some other—on occasions. The swarthy singer roused a sympathy in him, so that he broke in upon the song. “Sir,” said he, stepping forward, “it does my heart good to hear you sing. In these godless times it is rare to find a man who gives thanks to the Lord for the things of daily life.”

The tinker looked up but did not move, for his metal, fast growing hot, was at a crucial point. “I am glad that I give you pleasure,” said he.

“You give me much pleasure,” Tobiah answered; “a thankful spirit is something both rare and beautiful. If your opinions are as your song, then are you a man after my own heart.”

“I would ask nothing better,” the other answered, “for by your appearance I take you to be a good man.”

Tobiah smiled benignly. “I am a follower of what I take to be good,” said he; “Tobiah the Dissenter is the style by which I am known.”

“My name and calling,” the other answered, “are as old as yours; Jeremy is the one, and tinker and smith the other. Both, I take it, date from Biblical days.”

Here was a question of theology for Tobiah. He considered it a moment, but could not give his entire consent. “‘Jeremy’ and ‘Tobiah’ I grant you,” said he. “With

'smith' too you are in a measure right, for there were undoubtedly smiths among the Israelites in the earliest days; but tinker——"

"If smith, then tinker also," the follower of that trade assured him; "if the Chosen fashioned kettles, caldrons, and pots, it is not to be expected that such thrifty folk sent to the Assyrians to mend the same."

Tobiah granted that point likewise. "But Dissenters," said he, "where do you find them?"

"Noah was a dissenter," the tinker replied, twisting and turning the now glowing metal. "In a wicked and corrupt generation he dissented from the opinion held and accepted by the heads of the people, and moreover preached the same, for we are told he gave no consent to their ways. We have no record of his sermons. I doubt not if we had we should find his doctrines, for sternness of reproof and simplicity of worship, very like to those of the Dissenters."

This view was new to Tobiah, but he saw something in its favour: it might serve as a point on which to hang an exhortation to sundry members of the flock much given to eating and drinking, if not marrying and giving in marriage. Thinking of this, he looked with renewed favour on the man who had suggested it. He even sat down on a bank of earth to watch the smithy work which was now going forward. The tinker on his part forgot soon everything but his craft. *Ring,*

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chink, went the hammer again, sounding musically in the still autumn air, chinking in among the robins' piping, till the craftsman, in the joy of his work, silenced the birds by going on with the song Tobiah had interrupted—

"For the rain and for the sunshine,
For the old world's still green
face,
For the mist and for the moonlight,
For the wild wind's furious
race,—

Hear me, Master, when I thank Thee,
thank Thee for the earth's fair
grace."

Here he broke off, the one foot of the fire-basket upon which he worked completed. It was a beautiful piece, which called forth Tobiah's admiration, so that he asked where the man had learned his craft.

This, however, he would not tell. The Dissenter did not press to know: he was more interested in a man's creed than his craft, and the tinker's he guessed to be one which might jump with his own. Whether it was or not did not plainly appear, but the talk they had while Jeremy put out his fire and cleared his camp was very pleasing to Tobiah. So pleasing indeed that the good man hardly noticed what the other did till he had almost restored the common land to its original order.

"Why!" cried he then, "you have raised your furnace."

"Yes," Jeremy answered, "I have done here. I have been some days in this place, doing work for all the housewives round; to-day I move on to pastures new. When I break

camp I leave the place as near to what I found it as may be: I would not dishonour the earth with the unsightly remnants of my occupation."

As he spoke he gathered handfuls of the moist leaves that lay upon the ground, and scattered them over the ashes of his fire. Tobiah watched him in silence. When he had finished he asked, "Which way do you go?"

"Down the road to begin," the other answered; "after that I cannot say, for, truth to tell, I am in a quandary and know not what to do."

"Concerning what?" Tobiah asked eagerly. "Tell me, and maybe I can help to resolve you. It is not, of course, for me to give counsel unasked to one with your knowledge of the Scriptures; still two heads are better than one, brother, better by a good deal if both are long."

"That is so," the tinker answered, loading himself with his pots and gear till he resembled a hardware-stall on the move.

When he was at last ready they set out together, Jeremy explaining that he went to return sundry utensils to a farm some mile away.

"Now, brother, what is your problem?" Tobiah asked.

"Briefly, to wed or not to wed," the other answered.

"To wed!" Tobiah cried. "Of a truth that is not what I thought of you!"

"Nor I," Jeremy said, without resentment. "I have little fancy for the estate, and I am three-quarters of a mind to

give the woman a wide berth and go northwards without so much as seeing her."

"Who is she, and what is she?" Tobiah asked in some mystification. "How came you to be thinking of wedding one you have not so much as seen? Marriage at the best is but buying a pig in a poke, and such a marriage as you purpose is wondrous like buying a poke without so much as making sure there is a pig within it."

Jeremy admitted a degree of truth in this, but "I have heard somewhat of her," he explained. "It is said she is good to look at, though with hair verging on the red. That she has a temper that is not to be overlooked, but also that her dower is sufficient, and the man that takes her has but to hang his hat behind the door and sit down for the rest of his life."

"H'm," Tobiah allowed, "that sounds fair enough."

"Not fair enough for me," the other retorted. "For the matter of the hat I care nothing, —I'd as lief hang it up as wear it. But I have no fancy for the door where it hangs to shut me in, to sit down for the rest of my life even with the finest woman in Christendom. Nay, friend, I am a wanderer, a lover of open heaven, and to abide tied to a house would sort ill with my taste."

Tobiah wagged his head—"A rolling stone gathers no moss," said he.

"A stone has no use for moss," the tinker answered. "As for me, I have little use for home and goods. I already have all I need. I am a rich

man—I easily get more than I want, and have money to buy any book that is worth the carrying. And a leisured man—when I have earned my dinner I can labour at my craft for pleasure, not profit. And a travelled man, for I have wandered in more countries than I have fingers on my hand, and always with so little need of haste that I could stay to note even the hedgerow flowers. Verily, friend, I am a man without encumbrances. Like the disciples of old, I travel light, and I find it a pleasant and convenient thing; ‘the deceitfulness of richness’ bring ‘the cares of this world,’ and neither are to be commended.”

To this Tobiah listened half-convinced. He was not usually an easy convert; but this tinker man had cast a spell over him, and he never afterwards judged him quite as he judged others. Now, himself half-fascinated by the wandering life which at another time he would have disapproved, he argued no further, but only asked the other what he would do in the matter of the woman, even counselling him to think twice before he gave up his freedom.

“I have thought fifty times,” Jeremy answered, “and am still far from a conclusion. There are reasons why I should wed the woman and reasons why I should not. That which would suit best with my humour is to slip ring on her finger, set name to the register, and be off, without taking possession of her or her dower.”

Tobiah scarcely thought that a course to be commended, and

he said so. Soon after they came to the farm where Jeremy must return the kettles. There they parted with some protestations of liking, but no conclusion arrived at except that the tinker said that perhaps he had better go and look at the woman, to discover if she were able to take care of herself or stood in need of his protection.

Then they parted, and Tobiah went home, never for a moment joining the tinker in his mind with the man of no condition who had won Elizabeth Fothergill at play.

Neither did Elizabeth herself when later that day she heard of his coming to her farm of Fivelanes. She had been busy almost till dark seeing to the gathering of apples in her orchard. While she had been thus occupied, with the farm-boys up the trees and the girls gathering from the low branches, some one came to tell her the tinker was there. He had come, so he said, to see if there was any work for him, and if there was he prayed that he might put up in some outhouse and mend for her and the cottars near.

“He has come at a good time,” she said; “there are kettles to mend and tools to grind. Let David Garth see if he is of a respectable sort, and if he is let him put up in the brewing-house: there is a good hearth there, where he can make his fire in safety.”

So she ordered, and the order, David Garth being satisfied of the tinker’s integrity, was obeyed. At dusk she herself

returned to the house, and, having seen the apple-baskets safely stowed away, went within doors. Her heart was still very hot against the man unknown who had won her, and was so sure of taking her up at any time that he had not yet troubled to put in his claim. All day and every day the thought of him underlay all other thoughts, and did not grow the less because she hid it and gave it no outward expression. Indignation and pride swelled within her as she opened her own door.

The house she found as she went in was very still and dark. There was no one about. Even the kitchen was empty, except for a singing kettle that bobbed impatient on the hob. "Where can they all be?" she wondered, and opened a door to see, but there was no one there. Through the window beyond she could see the brewing-house, its unglazed window-space ruddy with firelight, letting out into the misty evening the sound of the tinker at work. Elizabeth stopped a moment, then she thought she would go and see if the dairy-maids had found their way to the brewing-house. Accordingly she crossed the bricked yard and, opening the door, looked in.

All the homestead seemed to her to be gathered in the out-house; even old Nan had had her elbow-chair brought in, and set close to the fire. David Garth stood by, handling a ploughshare and eyeing the tinker the while. The girls sat close in a shadowed corner;

one shared an apple, still crisp from the evening's chill, with a lad who put his arm about her. On the edge of the brewing-vats boys were perched, and on the corner of the hearth-stone was David Garth's grandchild, watching the blue smoke curl and the tinker's brown face glow and gloom as the flames flickered and the tale he told lit his eyes like sparks of blue fire.

"They are woods, indeed, my masters," said he, never ceasing from his work so much as to look up, "the black woods of Germany. Black by day, black as ink by night. At night-time one may see splashes as of white fire on the ground; in the distance they shine and move. Maybe they are broken moonbeams that have crept through the roof of trees: maybe wolves' eyes that watch. Then, low down and sad, comes the howling, creeping to the marrow of a man, and not to be forgotten. Maybe it is the sound of wind in the pine-trees: maybe the wolves talking, or some others that dwell in the forest. I have seen the wolves, my masters, coming soft, *pad, pad*, over the snow. See, here one, and here, and over yonder! Coming, coming, with heads low and eyes gleaming! I have seen, too,—few have seen it—I have seen the wolves dancing, bending their necks and fawning as they twist in the soft falling snow and dance to the piping —" He drew up his lips, and made the sweetest, strangest piping that ever set man's blood tingling.

As he did so he looked up from the old kettle he was patching and saw Elizabeth standing in the doorway. For a second they looked at one another; then she turned away and went out across the misty yard to the house.

III. THE WOOING.

For the better part of three days Jeremy the tinker worked at Fivelanes, mending the household gear and cleaning and sharpening instruments of husbandry. The cottage folk near by brought him their kettles to mend and their knives to grind. It was a busy time for him. The brewing-house was given over to him. On its broad hearth he made his fire, and beneath its unceiled roof he slept, for the nights were growing cold now for sleeping out o' doors. The folk gathered about his fire to listen to the tales he told as he busily soldered, and to the songs he sang to the harsh accompaniment of the grindstone or the more musical ring of his little hammer.

Elizabeth herself came to listen to the man more than once. Any given to noticing who watched at these times might have seen that, though neither of them spoke directly the one to the other, they were very mindful of each other's presence.

On the fourth day the nutting season began, and all the village that was able went out to gather the yearly harvest of the woods. The boys and dairymaids, and all who could be spared from the farm, went also, for it was a great time in those parts, and so difficult to

keep indoors the young folk who were bent on gathering nuts and kisses. The tinker was left with only the old people for company that day. Towards evening even they departed to go home and get ready for the nut-gatherers when they should come from the woods. Jeremy hardly seemed to notice, and worked on alone, singing very blithely. Elizabeth coming up the yard heard him, and stopped to listen,—

“For the hand of many a comrade,
Heart of friend, and face be-
loved,
Power to love, and, loving,
Feel their heart-beats answer
me,—

For that too, my Master, thank Thee;
all my thanks are due to Thee.”

So she heard him sing, and insensibly drew nearer and looked in through the open doorway. But he, unaware of her presence, went on with his work, now hammering and bending glowing metal, and anon breaking into song again,—

“For the sin and suffering, Master,
Days of wrong and nights of
sorrow,—

All that lends the zest and flavour
To life's gladness and death's
morrow,—

Hear me, Master, when I thank Thee,
thank Thee for the ills we borrow.”

He stopped, feeling her eyes

upon him, and looked up to see her standing in the doorway.

"That is a strange song you sing," she said.

"It is my doxology," he answered, not ceasing from work.

"Your doxology?" she said. "You would then give thanks for sin and suffering?"

"Most assuredly: suffering is an excellent medicine, and sin the finest contrivance for showing the beauty of righteousness: if there were no sinners how would the saints shine? Moreover"—and in the flickering firelight she saw his eyes grow serious—"Moreover, for myself I would as soon live full as live well."

She looked at him curiously. Then, "You have lived both full and well," she said, forgetting that he was only the tinker, and speaking as if she were not the mistress of the house.

"How do you know?" he asked.

She laughed a little. "Women know these things," she said; "they read them in men's faces."

He bent over his work. "Women sometimes mistake," he said. "I may have lived full—ay, I have, and truly it is a very pleasant thing to be alive. But well? No, I have not lived as well as you would seem to believe: there is one thing, at least, for which you would not soon forgive me, one thought for which I do not forgive myself."

There is little doubt but that he was thinking of the game at the Fox and Grapes and his

thoughts of her. And there is no doubt whatever that the affair was in her mind when she replied, "As to thoughts—to whom should one be accountable for them? I have murdered a man in my thoughts, and I am not sorry for it. It would please me to hear that he was dead indeed."

The tinker may have guessed her mind. "I believe," he said, "if the need arose you could kill a man with your own hand."

"Perhaps," she answered. "Do you think me a virago for the confession?"

"No; one able to take care of herself and her house, which seems to me well in a woman alone."

Elizabeth wondered how much of her tale he knew, but she said nothing of it. She came into the brewing-house the better to see him work. For a little she watched the metal glow and take shape under his cunning hand. At last she observed, "The first verse of your song was more orthodox than the last."

"But less true," he answered her. "For 'the hand of many a comrade' I am thankful, and also for some friends, but as to 'the face beloved'—"

"She has given you less reason for thanks?" Elizabeth asked, as he paused to give attention to his work.

She half expected to get some hint of a disappointed love: she was certain the man was not a common tinker, and it might well be (in her mind at least) that the faithlessness of some fair one had driven

him forth. But if she expected any such tale she was disappointed, for Jeremy, seizing the glowing metal with strong pincers, answered, "I have never yet seen a 'face beloved,' nor felt the heart-beats of any, answering mine or otherwise. I like not such close proximity."

Elizabeth laughed. "Nor I," said she; "still, the verse is pretty."

She watched him a while in silence. "You are a master of your craft," she said at last.

"I learnt it of masters," he answered.

She asked him who they were, but he did not fully tell her. The most he would say of them was, "They are a wandering people; in all the countries of Europe you find them—ay, it is said they are in the Indies too. Little, strong, black men, living by preference in the woods, though sometimes to be found in the towns, moving from place to place and plying their craft for the perfection of art more than for the profit of gain. They work, it is said, as Tubal Cain worked, building their furnaces even as he built his, and making things finer than any other men: the sword Excalibur, I believe, was of their making."

"But you are not one of them," Elizabeth said.

"No," he told her, "I am but a poor student with a bent for wandering. Or rather I was in the days when my good father lived. He destined me for the profession of medicine, and sent me to the schools at Leyden; but it was little medicine I learnt and many

other things. A man may learn much in the Low Countries, providing he does not sit too long in the lecture-halls. I learnt somewhat, and when my good father died and left me without a penny piece I went off to follow my bent, and a wanderer and a vagabond am I, and have been ever since the happiest of men."

As he spoke he threw his tools on one side, for his work was done. It was that same fire-basket at which he toiled when Tobiah found him. Now it was finished, and a beautiful and wonderful piece it was, in design both simple and grotesque, yet fulfilling its purpose completely, and in workmanship perfect in delicacy and strength.

Elizabeth was filled with admiration. "Whose is it?" she asked.

"My own," he answered. "The mending that has been brought me is finished; in this hour I have been spending your firing for my own work, abusing your hospitality."

"Nay," Elizabeth said warmly, "I am proud that any part of such a thing should have been made under my roof. I hope that you will stay longer and do yet more."

But Jeremy, though he thanked her, said, "I believe that my work here is done."

He looked at her straightly as he spoke, then turned away and began gathering together his tools.

"But you will not go now?" she said. "You cannot go; it is already almost dark. You must sleep here to-night, if you

will not sleep in the house—indeed, this place is but a poor shelter now that the weather grows cold.”

“I thank you for your hospitality,” he said; “if I may spend yet one more night here, I will, but I would sooner it were in this place; it irks me to sleep with curtains and ceilings close about me.”

She seemed amused by his whim, but consented: then she bethought her that she had a little knife that she would like cleaned and sharpened. She fetched it, a little stiletto of Italian make, and he fell to work on it, she watching the light shoot along the blade as he moved it. While they were thus busy there came the sound of the girls returning from the woods. The tinker hearing their voices and laughter said, “The nut-gatherers sound merry.”

“They do more idling than work in the woods,” Elizabeth answered; “it is almost the best of holidays to them.”

Jeremy had been told so. “They asked me to go with them,” he explained.

Elizabeth wondered which of the maids had been guilty of such boldness; but she only said coldly, “Why do you not go?”

Perhaps the tinker guessed what was in her mind, for his eyes twinkled as he answered, “Because I had no fancy for it. Moreover,”—so he said as he applied the knife to the stone,—“while I am under your roof, and eat your bread, and use your fire, I cannot take holiday without your leave.”

“You are mighty particular,” she returned; “do you ever take holiday?”

“Half the year or near it—as often as I like, usually, for usually I am nobody’s man but my own.”

She seemed mollified. “The woods are beautiful now, if you want to make holiday,” she said, gently stirring the ashes with her foot. “Indeed at most nut seasons I go out one day myself, to admire the trees, and see what the maids do.”

The tinker felt the knife edge with a careful thumb. “It sounds very fair,” he said. “Shall I to-morrow keep holiday, and you, to-morrow, go to see what the maids do?”

He did not look up, turning to set the knife once more to the stone, so he could not have read assent in her face; yet he guessed that she would come.

And come she did, though she decided a hundred times between that evening and the time of setting forth the next day that she would never lend countenance to the man’s surprising impudence.

But in spite of her decision and re-decision she came, and in the middle of the morning, long after the nut-pickers had started, they two set forth for the woods. The day was very fine, still and golden, with a clear, low sky, and the air so thin and crisp that the robin’s song came piercing and sweet as fairy piping. The nut-season that year was late, for though the summer had been one of extraordinary drought, rain in torrents had come in September, so that for almost six weeks the

days had been too wet and cold for the nutting. Now, however, that October was well advanced, the skies had cleared again, and the people from the village and the neighbouring farms hurried forth to the woods to gather what was left them of the nut-harvest. When Elizabeth and the tinker came to the woods they saw many of the folk,—here a family party, there a careful mother watching lest her daughter wandered into the thick undergrowth. Farther on a freer maiden rejoicing in her freedom with the lad of her fancy, and getting more kisses than nuts under the sheltering boughs. In one place, where the ground was clear and the ferns almost dry, a stalwart grandame sat on a log to watch a pot boil. The blue smoke curled upwards, and the crackle of the faggot sounded pleasantly in the silence, but the pot, ill-balanced, hung all aslant. Jeremy stopped and moved the faggot and settled the pot more straightly upon it, saying that he knew a deal of the tricky ways of fires. The old dame blessed him for it, and he and Elizabeth went on.

Down a narrow path now, where no nuts grew and so no sound of voices and laughter was to be heard. The ground was soft and black, with here a golden fern and there a crimson fungus filling the air with its smell. The whole wood was very fair and still, the leaves thick on the trees, for as yet there had been no high winds, though all were of molten gold or paler tints of yellow, save

where some tree—like a stately matron—was robed in sober brown, with only a touch of copper when the sun struck the outermost edges.

The beauty of the place went home to the hearts of the two who walked there. But to each it spoke differently. To Jeremy it came with a feeling of gladness and pagan rejoicing that worshipped the earth as well as its Creator. But to Elizabeth it spoke of liberty and freedom, rousing a passion of rage against the bonds that held her. At last her feelings broke forth into words. "Would God," she said, "that I had been born a gipsy, and might live always in such a place!"

Jeremy started at the words. "Would you choose it?" he asked, looking straightly at her. "Would you like it when the winter winds blew cold?—when age came creeping on and crooked your back and stiffened your gait? Would it please you when women passed you going to meeting in silken gowns, or cradled their babes warm by the snug fireside? If you would dare choose that, if you are not afraid——"

His voice had grown earnest and eager, but she, being full of her wrongs, did not heed, but cut in bitterly, "Yes, I dare choose that. I would have liked to have been born to it, for what is house and silken gown to a woman? Of what benefit is dower, and stock, and farm to her? For it she is bought and sold—ay, even lost and won at some alehouse game."

So she said in bitter anger. And Jeremy the tinker dropped

his eyes suddenly, walking on with clouded looks, the words that had come eagerly to his tongue stayed altogether.

Soon afterwards they came upon some of the nut-pickers, and for the remainder of the day busied themselves with the folk, having little to say to one another. Elizabeth went among the women, giving a watchful eye to the girls, while Jeremy gathered nuts. Elizabeth, looking to see which maid benefited by his labours, did not fail to observe that his gleanings always went to swell the small hoards of children.

On the way back from the woods—and all the folk from Fivelanes came together—who should they fall in with but Tobiah the Dissenter! That worthy man was on his way to the farm, bent on seeing, as he had promised his conscience, how the affair of Elizabeth's winning went. He at once joined himself to the party, and was clearly pleased to see the tinker among them. He asked him what he did in those parts, and when he heard that he was put up in the brewing-house at Fivelanes for the pursuit of his trade he showed much satisfaction. "This is famous," said he; "we will walk together, and you shall tell me how you have prospered in your wooing, and whether you are yet determined what course to follow."

Jeremy looked round to see if Elizabeth heard, but fortunately she was not too close. "I have decided to give up any idea of marriage," he said.

"Oh!" Tobiah made answer. "Perhaps you are right: there is little to recommend the married state to such men as you and me."

"There is much to recommend it," Jeremy returned; "but I see clearly it is not for me."

"What!" said Tobiah. "You have changed round, brother. A few days gone you were all against it; you were for liberty and a wandering life,—you had no fancy for hearth and home."

The tinker did not deny it. "Nevertheless," he said, "hearth and home have something nowhere else to be found: it is pleasant to see the fire glow and the folk gather round——" he spoke dreamily, with his eyes fixed on distance as if he saw a picture—the kitchen at Fivelanes and the firelight that flickered on the hams, and herbs, and onion-strings. "Ay, friend," he said, rousing himself, "I did not know till lately that a man alone could be lonely: a woman who is no fool is surely good company and a good friend."

But Tobiah did not think highly of the sex: in his opinion they were all fools of divers orders, only differing from one another in magnitude. This much he said during the homeward walk, proving the same incontestably to unhearing ears. Even if Jeremy had heard, the logic would have been wasted, for there was more than an answer to it when they came to the farm and saw the firelight glow and the preparations made for the

return of the hungry nut-pickers.

At that season of the year the dairymaids' heads were full of lovers and courting, and so, consequently, of charms and spells to divine who the future mate was to be. The great feast for such maiden-magic is All Hallows Eve; but there were some who could not wait for that, but must try their fortunes with philters and spells before then. Elizabeth, though herself but little older than the girls, paid no heed to such things, and even discouraged the whispering and mystery that went on. That night the maids whispered and giggled in the chill dairy: some old dame had told them of a wondrous posset which, when brewed, threw off steam with a magic power to show in its clouds the face of the beloved. Elizabeth heard what they said when later they mixed this and that and stirred their pipkin together. She stood a moment to watch them, as if she too would have taken part; then she turned proudly away, and they worked their charm, as they wished, alone.

Elizabeth sat with Tobiah that evening and talked gravely, and Jeremy, at Tobiah's request, was bidden to sit with them, though, since the Dissenter spoke a good deal of the scandalous doings at the Fox and Grapes and the rascal who had presumed to think he could win Elizabeth at play, it is possible the tinker wished himself elsewhere. The maids also wished it: they had hoped he would tell them their fortunes by his

heathenish cards, as he had done once before. But he did not do it that night, even when later all gathered about the fire, for Tobiah was there, and in the presence of that good man how could such a thing be spoken of? But they told tales as they sat eating nuts of the day's gathering, and apples that roasted and spat before the fire. At first the tinker was silent, as one with a weight on his mind; but gradually he threw it off, and told tales and sang songs, so that all hung on his words spell-bound. Even Tobiah fell under the fascination, though by degrees the tales and songs grew to be such as he at another time would have condemned with freedom. But it seemed it did not matter what the strange man said. Tobiah, like the lads and dairymaids, was ready to dance to his piping, and Elizabeth in her shadowed corner watched without speaking. She knew—but she alone—that the man was like one possessed by some reckless spirit. And recalling how he was now firmly determined to go on the morrow whatever befell, she wondered and wondered the reason of his mood, half fearing, half hoping.

Now, the girls who had brewed their posset and tried their spell, with what result is not told, had left the pipkin holding the mixture on a shelf in the wash-house. When all had gone to bed, and some indeed were already snoring, Elizabeth, being restless, went the rounds of her house to see that all was safe for the night.

Coming to the wash-house, she saw the pipkin, and seeing it, she suddenly halted. For a little she looked at it, then stretched out a hand to take it, but drew back again; but next moment she had it, and hiding it, though there was none to see, had carried it to the kitchen. Here the fire still smouldered, and through the unshuttered window a small moon looked. Elizabeth, paying no heed to the window, raked the embers together and set the pipkin upon them, kneeling down on the hearth to watch for the steam. It took time to rise, for the posset was cold and the fire low, but she waited patiently. At last it began to come, a little curl here, a thread that rose at the edge of the vessel and melted almost before it had left its source. But soon more came, and yet more, jets and puffs of fast-rising steam. She leaned eagerly forward, intent on seeing some face in the cloud.

So intent was she that she did not hear the window behind her softly pushed open. So intent that she heard nothing and saw nothing till she felt a touch on her shoulder, and looked up with a stifled cry, to see the face of Will Gifford in the gloom above her.

She rose to her feet and moved backwards from the circle of light. The cry—it had been low, and suppressed almost before it was uttered—was her only sign of fear. If her hands shook she clasped them over one another and held them quite still, and her voice when she spoke was calm and low.

"What do you want?" she said.

"You," he answered, leering upon her in the firelight.

He made a step forward, but she stood her ground and he stopped. "Why have you broken into my house at this hour?" she asked.

"Broken in!" he cried; "the window was open, I swear it! I saw you through it, I saw you in the firelight, and, by the Lord! when I saw you at this hour and in this glow I could not keep away."

"You flatter me," Elizabeth said with sneering lips. "But somewhat emptily, since you have parted with all right to me at this hour or any other. I understand that you lost me at play, so thus to succumb to my charms is a felony as any other housebreaking."

The words whipped Gifford—he muttered an oath. "Look you," he said, striding forward, "my rights are mine still; your father gave you to me, and you are mine. What is that paper worth, that scrawl given to no one knows who? D'ye think the fellow will dare show his face here and come to claim you? Should I have put you on the table otherwise? You are mine, I tell you, and your house must give me shelter to-night, for I'm hard put to it."

Elizabeth smiled in comprehension. "Here, then," said she, "we have an explanation of this sudden tenderness! But you mistake a little, I think, if not in the matter of the cards then in your judgment of me. I assure you that the man who

stakes and loses me at cards loses me altogether, though the devil himself were winner. And though this loser, this tender lover, were flying for his life, my door would not open to give him shelter." She leaned forward, so that they were close, and in the firelight he could see her eyes gleaming like steel. "You would do well to go," she said, "for you are the last criminal I would harbour beneath my roof. I would advise you to go now, and go speedily, by window or door as you choose."

But he did not go, he gripped her wrist. "You fool!" he said, and his breath was hot upon her. "Do I not know this house as well as you? Do I not know that you are cut off from all here, alone — alone with me?" He laughed and dragged her closer. "I have no rights, have I? Might's right, my beauty, at this hour."

She struggled in his grip; but even then she did not cry out. "Loose me," she panted. "Loose me, or, by Heaven above! I will kill you!"

He laughed again, and clasped her tighter. "We'll make terms first," said he.

But she had wrested her left hand free, and with it felt on the mantelshelf beside her. He thought she was but struggling for room to strike at him; he did not know that she felt in the dark for the knife Jeremy had sharpened yesterday. For a moment she felt, then her fingers closed over it, and she drew it towards her. As she did so she overturned a pewter

mug, which came crashing to the ground.

Gifford did not heed it: he knew the kitchen was too far removed from the household for the sound to disturb their slumbers greatly. Elizabeth did not heed it either: she was vainly trying to free the knife from its close-fitting sheath. There was another, however, who heeded—Jeremy, lying in the brewing-house, and sleeping the light sleep of one used to spending his nights in the open. He heard the noise, and was up at once; and locating the sound to the kitchen, he started to see what it might be. Before the clatter had much more than died away he was across the brewing-house, creeping on swift, noiseless feet to the kitchen door.

"First a kiss for friendship," so a voice within said as he came there, "then to sober business, and then a lover's talk in the firelight," and in the dark his quick ears heard a kiss.

There was a sound, half outraged cry, half snarl, then blows sharp and swift. Elizabeth, not able to free the knife-blade, beat at the leering face with the hilt.

"Devil!" Gifford cried in rage and pain, "she-devil!" and would have added other names more foul, had he not then gone staggering backwards under the tinker's blow.

For a moment he lay, the other standing above him. Then, "Out with you!" Jeremy said, laying hold of him with sinewy hands. "Out with you, before I pitch you out!"

Gifford, recalling the voice, suddenly recognised the man in the gloom.

"You here?" He got to his feet, for the other had suddenly loosed him. "You have had the face to claim your winnings, then?" he said. "That accounts for your care of these preserves!"

The tinker made no reply: he stood stock-still; and he knew, without turning his head, that Elizabeth by the fireplace was as one frozen. Gifford felt his advantage, though in the dark he could not see the other's face. "In good sooth," he mocked, "I gave Mistress Elizabeth credit for more pride. I did not know she was to be had by any Jack that could juggle the cards. But it's ever the way with women: they're all for the winner, even of a pot-house brawl!" He was moving backwards towards the window as he spoke,—he had almost gained it now. "I'll be going, my turtle-doves," he said; "'tis a shame to keep you longer from each other. Before I go, one word to you, Master Cheat. It is lightly won and lightly lost, remember; so you'd best keep an eye on this light lady, or she may be changing lovers again."

He had reached the sill now; but before he was over it the tinker was upon him, his paralysis past, and a sudden silent fury, which wellnigh proved the end of Gifford, mastering him. For a little they struggled, or rather Gifford struggled, frantic in the smithy grip which was battering the life out of him. He cried out once, and

choked once: after that it seemed the breath was out of him. And all the while Elizabeth stood by the fire, making neither sign nor sound, and none knows whether she was too stunned for speech or had some savage content in this chastisement.

At last Gifford, who was half out of the window when the other seized him, writhed or rolled free enough to fall from the sill to the herb-bed which lay but two feet below.

Elizabeth must have been watching very closely, for as the man fell, and before the tinker could be after him, she said—

"Please to bar the window."

Jeremy halted. One cannot bar a window from outside, so perforce he must remain within to do it. He hesitated a moment, glancing out; then he shut the window and fastened the shutters, then turned and faced Elizabeth.

"So you are he that won me?" she said, and her speech was slow and cool.

He bent his head.

"And you thought to leave here to-morrow?"

"At daybreak," he said.

Her lips set upon one another and her nostrils dilated. She moved towards the door, but before she opened it she spoke: "Having viewed your winnings, you do not find them as good as boasted, nor worth the taking? I thank you, sir, for the honour you do me."

And with that she went out, with head erect.

IV. THE WEDDING.

Tobiah the Dissenter was lodged in the best room of the house that night. It was a fine room, with a great bed well hung with curtains of crimson damask; but for all that the good man did not rest over well there. It is true he slept at first, but after a while something woke him. It may have been the hand of the Lord—he thinks it was; but it is certainly true that there had been a goose well stuffed with sage and onions for supper. A gosling in its prime, served with a sauce of apples that the frost has just touched, is a wonderful temptation to the carnal appetite. Whatever it was, something made Tobiah's sleep uneasy, and at last woke him past any drowsing. For a little he lay thinking on his sins—a profitable and somewhat sure way for a man to put himself to sleep. But the Dissenter was of so upright a life that he could not recall any great number of sins—at least, not sufficient for the purpose. So at last he got out of bed, to try if walking the room a while would make him the more ready for sleep. In the course of his walk he came to the window, and drew the curtains to look out. The moon was still shining, and by it he could see plainly the near barns and buildings. While he looked he saw something moving down the patch of shadow by the wall. This surprised him, and he watched

till the thing came out into the light, when he made it out to be a man carrying what seemed a smouldering brand, and walking heavily and lame.

Tobiah was about to push open the window and call out when he reconsidered it. The man had no business there, he knew: to call out were to give him warning, and so enable him to escape with his identity unknown and his wrongdoing unpunished. This was a mistake, Tobiah saw; accordingly he left the window and quickly drew on certain of his garments. It were far better to be out doing some good than lying idle and wakeful in bed; indeed it seemed to him more than possible he had been waked for this purpose. As soon as he was dressed he went downstairs on his stocking feet, for fear of waking the household. When he got to the door he slipped on his shoes and went out.

But outside he was disappointed, for, look as he would, he could see no sign of the man, though he searched right and left and followed the way he seemed to have taken. Past the end of the wall he went, beyond the barns even, stopping at last perplexed and somewhat troubled in the gloom of the stacks. It was while he was standing here, not determined what to do, that he first smelled a smell of burning. He snuffed the

air. There was no business to be such a smell now,—something clearly was wrong. Then suddenly he saw what, for from a building away on the right a puff of smoke was blown across to him.

Fire! There was fire here. In a moment Tobiah would have raised a cry fit to wake the dead, but at that very instant a man carrying a light came suddenly upon him.

It is hard to say which was the more astonished—the man who, all unsuspecting of an observer, came down the alleyway between two stacks, or Tobiah, who by then was more prepared to call help than to look for the cause of mischief. But the Dissenter was not one to stand idle at such a time: he had clapped hands on the man almost as soon as he saw him. He had him fast, and dragged him bumping between the stacks, admonishing him and bawling lustily for help by turns.

“Hey, then,” said he, stopping to get a better grip of his captive, “have I caught you red-handed! We’ll see to this, master, we’ll see—Fire! fire! fire! Wake, fools! Wake, sluggards and knaves! Wake! wake! Fire!—Ha! My thief, would you kick the man of God? Would you? He has feet, too, and not little ones,” and holding the man by the shoulders he propelled him before him with his foot suitably applied.

Tobiah’s roaring was not without result. Soon windows were thrown open and heads thrust out, and here one cried

to know what was the matter, and there one saw for himself. But naturally the man first on the spot was the tinker, who, sleeping in the brewing-house, was close to the noise. He was out almost before Tobiah was clear of the shadow, and, without wasting time in looking for the worthy man, made straight for the outbuilding, from which smoke and the cries of beasts were now pouring. Soon others followed,—David Garth, and a lad, a slothful heavy sleeper, who lay in the stables. Tobiah, seeing them, and seeing there was business towards which allowed of no delay, decided to keep justice waiting.

“Villain and destroying knave!” said he, “I cannot spare time to attend to you now. Wait you here, cool your heels, and consider your sins.” As he spoke he up with him into a great tub of hog-wash that stood by the wall. The tub was not more than half full, but large and deep and very evil-smelling, and when the lid was on and made secure the prisoner was as fast and as ill-lodged as in the county jail. Having thus made sure of him, Tobiah hastened with all speed to the fire, calling as he passed the house to the girls, who looked fearfully from the windows, to go rouse the neighbours.

Now Elizabeth, when she left the kitchen that night, walked up the stairs with head erect and blazing eyes, forgetful of the danger she had escaped in the anger which had been

kindled anew within her. Stately and stiff — as if there had been a crowd to watch — she went till she came to her chamber. There, though her head was still high and her anger hot, a mist seemed to grow before her sight, and before she well knew it two scalding drops found themselves in her eyes. She forced them back and shut her door, and because she would not allow herself the cover of darkness she kindled a light. Her hand was steady, the flame of the candle never wavered at all till, as she looked round, her eyes fell on something that stood before the hearth—the fire-basket of wondrous smith's work the tinker had finished while she watched him. It stood there before her hearth, and at the sight of it she held the candle all aslant, so that it guttered and shivered, though not so much that she could not see the beautiful workmanship and see also a fragment of paper within the thing. She drew nearer and nearer still, until she could see even the elf-locks of the iron goblin who held the basket, and read the words on the paper: "From Jeremy the Tinker, who comes no more."

She read it once; she read it again, then slowly and without knowing it she set the candle on a table, and, with her eyes still on the iron-work, sank down and covered her face. She had loved at last; at last she had found one she could love, and he had fallen, even below her lowest hopes. Nay, more — and the tearless sobs swelled up at the thought—he

had not found her worthy of his least regard: he was going without one word, without one word.

Thus she sat for a long time, till at last the passion was in a measure spent. She moved a little and looked up. The night by this time was far advanced, the air chilly. She had sat longer than she knew, crouched upon the floor; but though she was cramped, she did not get up, for a new thought came to her. Why, she asked herself, had the man given her this piece of his handicraft? why did he say he came no more? She recalled his recklessness of the evening, his gentleness in the wood; she recalled a hundred things he had said and done and looked. Could it be, was it possible, that he had come to honour—perhaps even to love—her, so that he was ashamed to claim her as he might? The thought was impossible, she told herself; yet she found it sweet, and turned and re-turned it in her mind.

She was still dwelling on it with no conclusion arrived at when Tobiah's cry of "Fire!" reached her faintly. She sprang up and stood listening, not able to make out what she had heard. For a second or two she heard no more: she was on the other side of the house, so it was only at the loudest that Tobiah's bawlings could reach her. She went to the window, but though she opened it and looked out, she could see nothing; all seemed still and dark. But as she stood there, clearly she heard again "Fire! fire!" No more

was needed; with all haste she ran into the passage. There she came upon the frightened girls, and old Nan divided between fears for her life and the safety of her little hoard stowed away in a chimney, the which she was sure would be the first to burn. From the girls Elizabeth learned all they knew of the mischief, and leaving them to quiet the old woman, she made what haste she might out of doors to the place, now burning merrily, where the best of her stock was shut.

It was well ablaze before she reached it, burning steadily in the windless night, but likely to be little affected by the water David Garth was pouring upon it. "Of what avail is that?" she cried, flying past him; "get the beasts out, man! Let the place burn!"

"Burn!" cried Tobiah, who heard but the last word, and did not even see the speakers—"burn it certainly will unless these lazy louts bestir themselves! Go, one of you; go, you daft-witted boy, if the gibbering females are too overcome with fear to help themselves or others—go, I say, and rouse the neighbours! Call some men of mind and muscle!" He cuffed the boy, who stood dazed and staring at the fire, so that at last the youth found his legs and ran off to call help. Tobiah was baling water from the horse-pond, and with Garth pouring it upon the blaze, working like one possessed, but finding breath for words sometimes. "Where is Jeremy Tinker?" said he; "he is a man at least! Where is he? Let him but

come and lend a hand with the buckets, and I will go drive out those idle wenches: they can fill pails with any—Jeremy! Hi, Jeremy!"

It was then that Elizabeth broke in upon them.

"Leave the place!" she cried. "Let it burn. What does it matter, if we can but save the beasts! We must have the beasts out!"

"Ay," David Garth retorted, "'tis easy said, but how done, mistress? Who's to move them? They're mad with fear, and stand like stocks. The tinker man he's gone in to talk with 'em. Maybe he talks beast talk; but sooner him than me in there."

"He is in there!" Elizabeth said, pressing her hands together—"He is in there!"

For a moment she stood like one breathless; then she ran headlong to the great door, which had been thrown open to its widest extent, so that the beasts might come out two and three abreast. She looked in, and forgetful alike of her anger and her dignity, "Jeremy!" she cried, "Jeremy, come out!"

He came almost in a minute, though not in answer to her call; for when he came, it was slowly, and leading two of the great black bullocks. He walked between them, holding a horn of either, and making the while the sweet shrill piping he had made the night he told how the wolves danced. The creatures bent their great heads and rolled frightened eyes; yet, while he held them and they heard

the strange sweet sound, they were docile. So he led them out past the fire to David Garth, who stood speechless, as if regarding a miracle, until he was bidden drive them to safety.

Elizabeth touched the tinker's arm, and even in that angry light he saw she was pale.

"I will get them all, never fear," he said, to reassure her.

"Do not!" she cried. "Stay——"

But he had gone, and there was nought for her to do but wait—wait through an eternity of night, which seemed by turns dark and flame-filled, by turns still as death, and anon full of the cries of beasts and of men; wait, while the fire grew and the acrid smoke wrapped all round; wait, while each time the man came forth coaxing the black beasts it was as if he came up from the glowing pit of perdition, and each time he went in it seemed as if it must be that he was gone to return no more.

In time the neighbours came hurrying to lend their help,—stout men and sturdy, wondering and almost fearful of the magic that mastered the beasts, but ready to do their best. In time, too, Tobiah had his will; and the scared girls came down to the horse-pond and dipped buckets, standing all a-row, their garments but carelessly put on and their shoes very full of water. Of this Tobiah recked nothing, keeping them busily at work. He kept all as busy as he could, besides doing

prodigies himself: he saw plainly the Lord had given the direction of this affair to him.

In one matter, at least, he knew more than any other, for he could tell how the fire began and who was the author of it.

"I have him safe," said he to Elizabeth; "I can put my hand upon him."

"You have him!" she cried, and her eyes lit with the baneful light of a woman roused: it was like to go ill with the man in safe keeping if harm befell Jeremy the Tinker.

She laid two fingers on Tobiah's arm—they were standing a little apart from the others. "Keep him safe," said she; "tell no one as yet; we will deal with him by-and-by. It is late now"—she pushed back her hair, as if she felt the heat of the fire, which she watched and watched like one who could not look away. "I think it is very late, it is hours since he went in. It is the last time of going; there is but the Alderney and her calf. I told him it were madness to go; a cow with her calf is beyond the power of man to move. See, see, how the roof burns! It will fall! If it falls, if he come not—may God burn the man!"

"Mistress!" said Tobiah severely, "your language is unbecoming one who has seen the signal mercy of the Lord besides the salvation of much stock."

Elizabeth pulled herself up. "I talk nonsense," she said; "it is the fear and excitement." She spoke calmly; but before she had finished she gave a low cry and swayed—nay, she

would have fallen had not Jeremy the Tinker, who that moment came behind, caught her in the nick of time.

"Are all out?" cried Tobiah.

The tinker nodded. "Fetch help," said he. "Quick, man! Mistress Fothergill is ill. Send one to the house to tend her while I carry her there."

But Tobiah would do no such thing. "I want all out here," he said; "tend her yourself. A dash of water is all she wants,—there's a plenty left. The maids and the men are all busy; I'll not call them off. In truth, I have other work to do: I have left Master Gifford over-long to pickle in the hog-wash as it is."

"Gifford!" Elizabeth roused at the name. And "Gifford!" the tinker cried.

"Ay," Tobiah answered composedly. "I caught him when he thought to fire the stacks, after he had set this place well ablaze; but I have him safe, and I go to give him somewhat of the mind of the Lord."

"Gifford!" Elizabeth repeated.

And Tobiah, who was about to go, turned back to say, "I'm sorry for you, mistress, but I fear you cannot well wed a felon,—in prison he will certainly be for this,—and if you do not wed him it is likely the other will put in his claim, and will be hard to set off, though I, with the Lord's help, will assist you as I may."

With this Tobiah went off to the butt of wash to reason forcibly with the prisoner therein.

But concerning the difficulty

he had just raised he was not called upon to pronounce; the two he left settled it without him. But it is to be concluded that the man who won at the Fox and Grapes did put in his claim, and put it forcibly. Though Elizabeth seemed able to stand alone when Tobiah left her, before the good man was ten paces away she was in much need of, or at least encompassed by, the tinker's arms, so one can but surmise he pressed his claim. It was afterwards observed that the faces of the two shared the smoke-grime very equally. And a barn cat creeping out heard him say, "I renounce my right, but the thing must still be, for you need me and I need you, and we love, dear, we love, and that's the best way both to win and to wed."

Jeremy the Tinker did not go away at daybreak: he spent the livelong day mending the oldest kettles, such as had not been thought worthy repairs before, and under his skilful hand they became almost as new. And while he worked he sang his doxology right through from the beginning, and with a verse that no one had heard before at the end—

"For it all, my Master, thank Thee.
Thou hast given, 'tis from Thee,
Life's full glory and its richness,
Power to love, to think, to see,
All the gladness of existence,
Just to breathe, to feel, to be,—
For it all, my Master, thank Thee; all
my thanks are due to Thee."

And Elizabeth heard him,

and smiled, a new gentle smile that her face was not wont to wear. Then she turned back to what she had in hand—the sorting of old chests and the getting of finery into grand array.

Before November was out there was a wedding at Five-lanes with much merriment and rejoicing, and more new gowns than had ever before been seen at one time in those parts; for the dairymaids were each given a bran-new dress in honour of the occasion, and some of them were so fine that for a time they could hardly look at their lads. Afterwards, however, they thought better of it, especially when it came to passing the cake through a ring and putting it beneath pillow to give dreams of a future mate. On all sides it was agreed that there never had been such a wedding, such mirth and laughter, such fiddling and dancing, and spiced ale and roast sucking-pig, and tamarind jelly and succulent young goose beloved of Tobiah. The worthy man himself was there and well to the fore, and, it is said, unbent in a manner before unknown.

Of Will Gifford little was afterwards heard. He left that part of the country. Elizabeth and the tinker, seeing they owed him so much (*i.e.*, each other), determined to forgive him the fire and other matters—for the last he certainly had already received some punishment at Jeremy's hands. Tobiah

was not all displeased with this arrangement: he said justice demanded Gifford should be taken before a magistrate, but since that was not to be, he would himself do what he could for the man's soul. And he did, exhorting him very forcibly, and in such a manner that he was heard to dance in the butt of hog-wash, where Tobiah kept him safe during the exhortation.

Of the marriage of Elizabeth and the tinker there is nought but good to tell, for they both brought something of sense as well as love to the union, and neither kept the other on too short a cord. So that they lived in peace, ruling the homestead together, but sometimes wandering forth when the weather was fair and the earth called them, going for days at a stretch no one knew where, to the scandal of the neighbours and the great joy of themselves.

Thus was Elizabeth Fothergill won, and thus did Tobiah the Dissenter for once lend his countenance to a thing the righteousness of which he was not sure. For Elizabeth was won at play—a devil's method—yet Tobiah graced the wedding with his presence, and often afterwards honoured the house of the pair—a thing the righteousness of which may be questioned. But who is without error? and what, indeed, would the world be without some certain kindly frailties?

THE PLEASURE OF DECEPTION.

THE worship of Truth is one of the oldest affectations of mankind, and one of the most transparent, for the human race burns at least as much incense at the altar of Error. Our species is, in fact, as strictly utilitarian in its morals as its implements. Should a beautiful ideal prove useless, it is discarded for one of less symmetry; or, if that fail, for one frankly ugly that will serve the turn. So universal has been this habit, that the very accordance of reverence to a moral is a hint of its burial. Ethics, like saints, are not canonised until they are dead, and men bow with the deepest veneration to preceptive bones that are crumbling. Thus with Truth: her advocates, from Plato to Carlyle, pleaded with a world which had already tried, condemned, killed, and canonised her, finding her more serviceable as the occupant of a shrine than as the companion of bed and board. There is no pretence of doing anything more than worship her; and the very solemnity of her ritual is the best evidence of the world's preference for deception.

There is something shocking in this adoration of Truth by beings who consort eternally with her supplanter. It is as if a man, out walking with his mistress, were to cross

the road for the purpose of meeting and saluting his deserted wife. For Truth is the wife of the soul of man. The union, consecrated in the great empty cathedral of the newly built world, is indissoluble; there is no "until death do part" in the marriage service of immortals. There is no man of all men who does not know Truth as his own when he sees her, who cannot speak and act her if he would. Yet there is scarce a word spoken or a deed performed of all the daily millions of both that has not in it something of the untrue, of deceit; and this commonly so uselessly, with such absence of gain, or even of desire for gain, on the part of the deceiver, that there can be but one motive, that of pleasure. Otherwise it would be motiveless, and therefore inhuman. There is, in short, a universal delight in saying, doing, and appearing the thing, Carlyle's thing anathema, the thing that is *not*.

Let the reader, when alone with the only truthmonger of his race, himself, he lies in bed wooing the death of that day's life, let him commune with himself, and in the scales of his memory weigh how much of the body of God¹ he has served to his fellows in the twelve hours. A scruple, perhaps, of divine matter unalloyed, if he

¹ "Truth is the body of God."—Plato.

be a careful man and has had good fortune; otherwise no more than a grain, or none at all in a hundredweight of talk and coming and going. And this, to repeat, seems no matter for regret, or, as it might well be, of terror, but usually of gratulation; the last thoughts of the drowsing deceiver as he sinks into the semblance of the dreaddest truth of all run thus: "A, whom I met to-day, went away thinking thus of me, whereas I am really thus; B, I know, imagines I am a wizard at that, and indeed I talked not unskillfully to that effect; here in the delightful loneliness of my own company I hug my utter ignorance of the whole matter; to C I wrote this; before D I did that, lies both; C and D are no nearer the truth of me than before." Thus and much more. Men and women are players indeed, tricked out and caparisoned in motley a thousand times more varied than that put upon them by the great Manager who dressed them for the stage. They alone of all creation choose to move incognito amongst their fellows, with a cloud of what they would be thought to be hiding what they are.

The pleasure in deception (I speak not of great and profitable frauds, but of the *abattis* of pretence laid around the fortress of every man's self) is plain enough, and though all would deny it, is sought and enjoyed by all. Man is not really a gregarious animal. Though he loves to move in crowds, his real life is passed

in loneliness, and in a constant struggle to preserve his individuality not only from commixture but even from contact with that of another. There is no more solitary entity in Cosmos than a human soul, and none more jealous of its solitude. It faces its fate alone. Though in its hour of weakness it seeks for solace from its kind, it is with conscious deception; for knowing that no greater shame could come upon it than the uncovering of its nakedness, it has no intention of showing even its honourable wounds. It is this that makes men ill at ease in the presence of those uncomfortable beings gifted with what is called the "power to judge character." Persons notorious for this quality meet with a double measure of deception, and their penetration is constantly discounted when it would be of most service to them, for instance in choosing companions or *employés*. For their gift is a danger to the fortalice; the sentries are doubled, the casements closed, and one of the greatest difficulties that such men have to deal with is the constant sapping up to human *reduits* or keeps, defending themselves with all the artifices of deceit against the capture and disgrace of discovery.

Men use deception, also, for defence in other forms. Those who have ever acted upon the stage will recall the sense of freedom and irresponsibility which attends a clever "make up." I have seen the shyest

men and maidens brazen it out behind the footlights in amateur drama, secure in the invisibility of wigs and paint, and obviously enjoying the vicarious courage which enabled them to face, as Polly Eccles or Dick Phenyl, a thousand eyes which would have shrivelled their actual selves with nervous terror. Conversely there is no more deceitful man than a diffident one. It is agony to him that the world should hear his own thoughts in his own words; but he feels a delightful immunity in delivering thoughts and words he has invented for himself,—a part, as it were, written for his own acting, the very antithesis, perhaps, of his real opinions. You may see such a one in every place where two or three are gathered together for conversation. He is bold, glib, and decided; but the machinery of his talk is always performing a feat as miraculous as if a silk loom were to turn out rivets of brass, for never in his life does he speak the thing that is in him. And as schoolmasters come to lord it in other company than that of short-legged boys, and ministers get to “improving” every occasion however insusceptible of improvement, so do these morbid victims to the habit of insincerity find it harden and grow fixed upon them, until at last, instead of deceiving on occasion, they actually seek occasion to deceive. Who can doubt that there have been instances in politics, science, and religion of

men who thundered opinions for which they were no more responsible than for the Ethiopian Ootatauch; sometimes even attaining the chieftainship of a party of which, if they had their way, they would be not at the head but the throat? It is more than probable; there have been strange *volte-faces* when the ground has grown firm enough beneath the feet to turn upon.

But all this is to consider deception rather as armament or shelter than an amusement. Yet human nature, more favoured than the chameleon or leaf-insect, derives more than security from its protective coloration. It experiences an exquisite satisfaction in being disguised, even in its most trivial transactions. First appearances are deceptive indeed; it is the commonest commonplace that so-and-so “is not in the least what I thought him at first.” This man seems bluff and frank, that rude and thoughtless: it takes long companionship to show that the first is in reality morose by nature, and the other tender and solicitous. Who does not know many who never appear to strangers but as negatives, black in the white parts and white in the black, not from jealousy of their virtues or shame of their vices, but from pure caprice and the love of deceiving? If any say that he does not know such a man, he does not know himself. It is often amusing to observe a person who is busy at this innocuous deception, and imagin-

ing it to be successful. Like an artist he lays on his strokes—a shadow here, a point of light there; he watches anxiously for the effect, and his satisfaction in the false picture he paints of himself is great when he sees it is successful. Curious, that whilst almost every man passes his time in thus misleading his fellows, how seldom it occurs to him that he too is being deluded by the other's equally feigned acceptance of him as he is not.

Such mines and countermines are the commonplaces of that eternal warfare we call conversation, and they are often dug and met with consummate cunning. Mere words are weapons too gross for such ethereal fence and parry: how admirable the art, what evidence in itself alone of man's immeasurable remoteness from the animals, which can answer an unfounded boast with a look of admiration, or a pretended affliction with a sigh of sympathy. These devices are displayed a thousand times daily: two yokels cannot meet at the pump in the yard but you may observe them, either in the speaker of the solitary remark or his hearer. They will be seen even in the chance passing of an utter stranger in the street, who, becoming aware that your gaze rests upon him for a moment, assumes instantly a gait or an air that you know to be foreign to him. It is not, however, to be argued that he is therefore dissatisfied with his real walk or carriage; he is probably well pleased with

both, but an irresistible impulse compels him to disguise them from you, and he passes on the happier that he has deceived you in respect of them. These things are so common, so much part of our nature, that they may seem incredible. Let the disbeliever put them to a trial, and he will gain a new knowledge, that of the infinitely whimsical chiaroscuro filling the background of the nature of his species.

Yet it is vain to wonder that a race of individuals find pleasure in deceiving each other, when nothing is more certain than that they pass whole lifetimes wrapped in the enjoyment of deceiving themselves. The poppy-crowned king of sleep is not the necromancer to raise man's finest dreams. Wild and beautiful wraiths he summons, but so diaphanous that even closed eyes can see through them and turn contemptuously from them as having no substance. It is not until his sway is ended, often in that sweet half-hour's interregnum between the laying down of his sceptre and the return of the tyranny of out-of-bed life, that the thirty-shilling Old Master discovered in a pawnshop glows genuine on the wall, the dead shares leap like young lambs in the Stock Market, and the frigid bow of the Duke's daughter becomes a signal of love. There is no existence so intolerable to men as that which lacks glamour and incident, and as none is more common, the life of the average individual would

be insupportable had he not been endowed with the fairy palette of imagination from which to glorify the drabness of his days with splendid pigments. None dream so bravely as the milliner's work-girl and the lawyer's clerk. The first sings at her toil; she is shortly to be the bride of an Earl—poor thing! an Earl might do very much worse. The latter whistles softly over the ledger; one day he will ride a Derby winner, or "knock out" the champion middle-weight at the National Sporting Club. Up in her dressing-room, scented holy of holies, littered with baby-ribboned nainsook and the hundred filmy trifles which seem to caress a woman rather than clothe her, a beauty is taking counsel of her mirror regarding a paragraph in a Society paper which has declared her to be fairer than ever. When Cassandra perished her soul was transformed by metempsychosis into a woman's looking-glass; the milk and roses are as fresh as ever, and Time is dealing with her hair which used to trap the sunbeams as with the sun itself. Work-girl, office-boy, and beauty know well the utter impossibility of these things, yet they step the lighter for having conceived them.

The analysis of self-deception reveals nothing more than that indestructible hope which deceives mankind. The pessimistic philosophers fight for a lost cause, though all experience is embattled on their side. Hope still walks with the murderer to the scaffold, and

bends over the bedside holding the hand which is weaving to and fro in the terrible gesticulations of death. By the mercy of God the last look of the doomed is upon the single sunbeam darting in through the lessening chink, and not upon the fast-closing door. There has never been a sane man who was without hope, however hopeless his condition: it is no sophistry of the coroner's court which makes suicide the act of a maniac. "Suicide is confession," declared Daniel Webster, and the human being who, having committed no crime, reddens with his own blood, confesses the presence of the dread mordant of madness as surely as the litmus paper of the chemist betrays an acid with its blush.

Self-deception, then, is the opium that eases the pain of existence, and, like the "drowsy syrup," its counterpart, puts the realities of life to shame with its visions. It is the ready money always in the pocket to meet the bills that are being sent in continually against our mental endurance. The young man, as Hazlitt said, thinks he will never die; the poverty of the poor man is but a temporary embarrassment. There is no more curious and subtle form of it than that which deceives us, not only in respect of our circumstances, but actually of our own impulses. Who can say always that he performs a certain action with the motive which that action represents? Who, reflecting how often he thus completely baffles himself,

can help distrusting (as often for good as for evil) the actions of others as evidences of their sincerity? Truth, evidently, is not a necessary of daily existence; her very name has something in it of unpleasantness—"To tell you the truth," "The truth is," "Come, out with the truth!" all preludes to something disagreeable, or, as the worldly countess points out in Mr Barrie's 'Admirable Crichton,' as often as not the spring-board from which to take off into a river of false-

hood. And if Truth is not, as is pretended, the food of the soul, harmless deception, such as is dealt with in these reflections, is certainly not the poison. Call it rather the condiment which renders palatable the tough meats to which we are called to sit down. Let it be reviled only as a philosophical exercise: even to do as much is but to add ingratitude to fresh deceit, for deception is the only indestructible earthly pleasure of humanity.

SCOLOPAX.

CHILDREN OF TEMPEST.¹

A TALE OF THE OUTER ISLES.

BY NEIL MUNRO.

CHAPTER XXIII.—IN SHEALING DAYS.

JIB-BOOM and his sloop came three times over the Minch from Lowland voyages (for Corodale's trade was thriving): thrice, Anna, hearing the *Happy Return* was back at Uskavagh, went to bed early to hasten her happiness, all in a tremor that kept her awake thinking, "To-morrow! to-morrow! there is sure to be word for me to-morrow"; but the morrow left her desolate. Col would come on these occasions with a face drawn as long as a fiddle, and empty-handed, with not a scrap of news, blaming his brother in a heat of manly annoyance, but cunningly mixing brotherly excuses and the sentiments of a noble loyalty with his blaming. Anna prized his awkwarddest advocacy, but somehow was always dubious of her visitor. She was glad to see him go, and still he would be no sooner gone than she must long for his returning: he was her hope, he was her single bond with the mainland, where Duncan had so strangely vanished. The weeks, for all but her, went past on birds' wings, as Uist says. Summer came with the mouth of melody and exceeding bland, songs on the mountain, pipings and twitter-

ings along the machar and in the sounding sea-arcades. Atlantic in that weather dozed in the yellow bays—the seamen's friend; west winds fanned the reeds; the tranquil islanders turned the taste of soft sea-breezes on the palate, smacking the tang of it as if it were a liquor, and with their tilling done, passed their days awhile in an idleness that was blessed to soul and body. Of every household in the Isles only Boisdale presbytery did not share the season's influences. Not that Anna, though grieving, was without a smile, or went abroad with a face inviting compassion. She was herself as much as ever (to all but Ludovick sometimes and her evening pillow), and even Col, eagerly watching for his own encouragement, could see no sign that she had more than a temperate interest in Duncan. Col was the New Man again, diligent at Mass, constant in attendance at Boisdale presbytery: seeing Anna as brisk and cheerful as before, the delight of the townships, jocular with plain folk, diligent in her housewifery, as perjink as ever in her attire, it was little wonder he deluded himself with

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the belief that his prospects brightened. There was nothing in her manner to tell him that the wound to her pride was clean forgotten, and that she was back to her old devotion and hopeful of being made happy by-and-by.

It came to the time of the summer shealings, when the cattle grazed on the uplands till the corn of the levels should ripen for the hook. On a day in early June the people of the island rose and gathered together sheep and cattle and horses, and drove them to the hill recesses and the tablelands of Hecla and Benmore. All the world went—women and men and children, and sang on the way; God's flame, the butterfly, the *dealan-de*, no airier among the flowers than the Boisdale bairns that romped in the wayside hollows, or clambered up *eas* and *corri*, the lark shaking his soul out in the blue. Father Ludovick having prayed, and blessed their going, looked after them, with Anna, from the chapel rook with something of envy.

"There goes mankind at its simplest, and best, and cleanest!" said he.

"I'm in the humour to admit the simplest, and will even stretch a point and say the best, but not, sage man! the cleanest," answered Anna playfully. "Did you not see Dark John? He looks as if his terror of water extended now to the very wells."

Ludovick did not hear her; he was lost in his abstraction, stirred within by vague associations roused at the sight of

that wandering band. "I declare," said he, "the shealing season always makes me wish fortune had made me something else than a priest. My pasture on the machar here is bare enough, God knows! with a constant nibbling at the same old doctrines. I wish I could take my flock into some place of juicy grasses in among the hills. I'm tired, I'm tired!"

He looked uneasy at the huddled little hamlets that gathered round Stella Maris, children of the church; God love them! how he felt for them!

"Just the vapours, Ludovick, nothing else," said Anna, putting her arm in his and very tender; "come home and I'll make you a dish of tea. You'll be much more comfortable at night in Boisdale presbytery, I assure you, than in a hole in the wall of a shealing bothy."

He laughed at himself and her, but still was mildly sorrowful, half for parting with his people, half for his inability to go with them.

Indeed, it was no wonder a poor priest should crave for Airi-nam-bo. What better could Eden offer than that green garden of mountain grass and flower on the slope of high Benmore! When at noon the people reached it, they could not but think it blessed, looking on Loch Eynort, looking out upon the Minch and far to Skye with its peaks snow-silvered yet, and the purple deep of glens, looking to Tiree and Col, the flat fat granaries of the Isles

—green rafts floating on the sea, looking to Arisaig and Ardnamurchan vexed so much by storm, and Mull of the mountains. While the men repaired the bothies and the women cooked the shealing feast, how the children of Boisdale played! Dark John, who had come with the cattle of a better man at sea, could not but stop his mending the pleats of a wicker door to look at them noisy in the haunts of last year's holidays, startling the sea-fowl from the cliffs and chasing the trout up mossy burns. Households clustered on the grass when the meal was ready, the wilderness was festival.

"Draw in, good man, draw in," said the Dalvoolin woman to John, who, being no wife's man, was the guest of any that would take him. "Draw in, just man, and try my good-daughter's cheese. It is not every day we kill a wedder. Long's the way you have to go back to-night, unless you will be sharing some *crupa* and biding till the morn."

He spat seaware, and took a seaman's knife to the kebboch. "Not a bit of me," said he. "I must be at my trade this very night, and my trade is on the leaping sea."

"With your trews rolled up over the knees and you wading with a fish-spear," said the virgin woman Bell Vore. "Could you not be content in the burns of Airi-nam-bo with the baggy-minnows?"

The men and women, sitting in a circle of stones, laughed at John's vexation that made him

dumb. He put his hand in his pocket and took a little dulse, the stuff that makes men brave who have plumbed sea-depths, and had the vision yellowed, and filled their stomach with the bitter beginnings of creation.

"Come, John! Bell Vore must aye be sharp as the shelister: never mind her, but stretch your hand and try again my own good-daughter's cheese," said the kindly dame of Dalvoolin. "'Tis sweeter by far, I'll warrant, and fuller of nourishment than that seaweed. God! that a man should waste his stomach on such trash!"

Dark John took cheese again and thick oatcake, with butter spread inch-thick by the good-wife's thumb. He wished that he were gone, for he feared the women and the virgin most of all, certain she had some plot to marry him. The families were scattered on either side of the burn where the children waded; great talk and laughter sounded everywhere but at his group; the smoke of fifty peat-fires rose lazy in the air of the afternoon, and a diligent man was tuning a pipe to a dance-tune in a cave of the cliff below them.

"Fine I know the reason for your hurrying, just man," said Bell Vore, at him again. "You are not going back to Boisdale at all at all this evening, but are bound for Corodala."

"It was in my mind, I'm not denying," he confessed, alarmed at her divination of a thing he had never mentioned. "But who could have told you that, Bell Vore?"

"Oh, I guessed," said she; "you were not within a handful of miles of Col without communication. You are very chief of late with that fine gentleman; 'tis not, I'll warrant, what you get from him."

"Daughter of the one I'll mention not, sing dumb, sing dumb, I'm bidding you!" cried John. "There's not his better in the three islands! *Oh righ!* did he not save my life!"

"More shame to him, the meddler! and let him take what he'll get for it if there's any truth in proverbs."

"I wish Herself had not so much to do with that same Col," said the goodwife. "Have you seen the mouth of him, neighbours? Take a look at it if you get the chance on a sunny day or on the right side of a crusie-light, and you will see the miser. I do not like to see that *biorach* mouth so much in Boisdale chapel, nor his foot so often at the white-house door."

"Och! there is nothing wrong with the fellow at all, at all," cried some of the men who were hacking the cheese. "The prettiest man in the islands, and a back on him like the gable of a house."

"Oh, very well, very well!" said the goodwife. "You can have it what way you like, my loves. Ill would it become me to call myself a judge where my goodman was before me. Indeed it is well enough known that wisdom abides in breeks. But I'll be keeping my own opinion."

"Hush! hush! I'm putting command on you," said her

husband; "you must not be judging the gentry."

"Gentry indeed! he's that but on the half-side; what was his father but Para Dubh? so mean a fellow he would not let his kitchenmaids pare the rinds off their cheese."

"Oh men! men!" cried the spinster, and looked at Dark John as if he had been dirt.

The sweat broke out on him. "On my soul!" he thought; "there's the devil himself in that woman: she'll have me yet if my luck leaves me."

"Have you seen him at Mass, men and women? I need not be asking the girls—faith! they see nothing else. He has his eye more often on Herself than on Master Ludovick. And little I like his affability, neighbours, with his sweet word of day for rich and poor, his Master This and Goodwife Yon: be sure I'm telling you he has his reason for it."

"Och, men! men!" said the virgin again, and put her tongue a little way out at Dark John.

"Oh yes, I'm away with it! she has got her eye on me, and I might be her father; five-years - and - ten - and - three - twenties of age come Martin-mas," thought he, and his seaweed had as little taste as shavings.

"Corodale is of the very best," the men maintained,— "not the best of him in the Isles for sport and for ability. He was on the top of the brae when courage was given away and good looks were going."

"It's the truth you have there, lads," said Dark John,

and started to tell again for the hundredth time since Michaelmas last how he felt when the waves swept over him and he tasted the deepmost brine. It was a story he told in a wonderful way to make women gasp and men uneasy. The horrors of it ever grew with each narration : from other fires men and women ran across to listen ; the children, seeing his movements and hearing his voice so high, ran up too ; he put the blood of his heart in his thinking, and held them in a spell.

Only Bell Vore, the virgin woman, kept her own humour, and when the tale was done she was back to her jibes again.

"Yes, yes, he fished you out, and I'll warrant he'll make you pay for it. You might be Corodale's *gillie cas fleuch*, to see you coming and going upon his errands."

"I would go to the Worst Place for him," said Dark John, and banged his fist on the rock he sat on.

"Ooh ! you will go there away, and Corodale will have to be putting up with your company," said the woman, who found that folk enjoyed her humour. "My grief ! my loss ! my hope and my losing !" thought Dark John, "here's a woman sure with her love on me : wasn't I foolish this day to come to Airi-nam-bo ?"

"It's busy your master is nowadays at the courting ; but if his brother, a better man, was here, Himself was better pleased, I'll warrant. Ooh ! it is a scandal—a scandal ! Col

Corodale never came over the moss so often unless he had a greedy man's purpose. Pity on me that I was not her mother, to tell her beware of the gled."

"I'm thinking now we need not be bothered about that," said the goodwife. "Master Ludovick, that knows everything, will be sure to have the sight of him, and indeed she makes it plain enough herself that she has no taste for him and his Spanish beard. Do you not see it, neighbours ? When it was Duncan was after her we dared not go round a corner without a cough for the fear of meeting them, and her with her face like the fire for shame. If she has to take a step from the door with this fellow she will go out of her way to meet the like of you and me, and stop and gossip till the man is yawning."

"It is right enough you are there, good woman," said the neighbours. "Have we not seen it ourselves ?"

"And the *Ron*, now—the little boat—did ever yourselves see her set foot on it since this fellow took to the wooing ?"

"Not once !" said the men, who in Duncan's time had so often called their women to the door to see a boat in the splash of the moon in the Sound.

Dark John forgot that the spinster hunted him in his trouble at a new discovery. If Col was courting in vain, farewell to the fifty years' fortune ! He had thought things went well, his notion being that women by nature took to the man who came handiest.

The men stretched themselves lazily, the sun hot on the backs of them, and rose to their occupations. Some were fishers, and must return to their boats in Boisdale, for the white fish ran till the end of June. They left their wives and daughters in the shealing, and set off on their way across the heather. Cows came in for milking; women put their cheeks against the flanks, and the milk purred in wooden cogues. Still Dark John stayed in Airi-nam-bo, fearing Bell Vore, and yet in a fascination. She paid no heed to him, but that did not deceive him: well enough he knew that she was wishing him, and if she had no pity, he was gone, that had so often boasted never a petticoat should master him and spoil the peace of his home. He chewed his sea-weed, roamed from door to door of the summer-huts, green with winter mosses, but always found himself, sooner or later, drawn to the side of the spinster woman, where she eyed him with contempt and to his great confusion.

"It is time you were off to your master," she told him at last, but in a way, he thought, that dared him.

"There was never a man that mastered Dark John," said he.

"Nor a woman that called him master either," said the spinster. "Och! poor creature!"

"Saints help me now!" he thought; "she'll drag me, right or wrong, to the Boisdale altar. To the devil with them and their courting!"

"I'm asking you this," she

said on another tack; "what took the other one away?"

"Who?" asked John.

She put out her tongue at him: he saw there was no use beating about the bush with this Bell Vore. "It's more than I can tell you, I declare," said he, "unless it was his feet."

"Sharp! sharp!" said Bell Vore. "There's a tongue wants clipping. The man would be a fool that would tell you. If it was not that they quarrelled, and the like has happened before with sweethearts, your man has put between them, with his eye on the *ulaidh*."

"The other fellow had his eye on it too, if there's anything in the song; and if fortunes are going, who but the cunningest deserves them?"

The spinster stopped her milking, and rose with her cogue to make for the bothy. "It's time you were off," she told him again; "and you may be telling your master there'll be day about with him for this. Some of us know very well how came the song and what sent Master Duncan to take the world for his pillow. Are you hearing, *gioltar*?—are you hearing? Tell him we'll have his brother back in Boisdale before the heather."

He stood dumfounded where she left him. Faith, this was news more dire than ever! If Col's plot was known to women like Bell Vore, it was as good as published to the world in another week, and Col's chance was gone. Who could have told her? It was something more

than a guess. He chewed dulse and hung about the shealing for another hour, hoping he might learn more; but nothing came of it.

Then he made for Corodale through the Pass, and skirted the shore, where wild geese—bernacle, lag, and brent—answered the gander's loud

"Honk! honk!" The night was before him at Corodale; stars as thick as herrings in a trammel-net gladdened the sky, but Corodale House was black; and his old ill-luck in that house was with him, for Col was not at home. He was in Benbecula, the women said.

CHAPTER XXIV.—SAND DRIFT.

The inn of Creggans, rimed with the salt of nor'-west storms, its rannoch thatch rotting to dust in the summer weather, was a place that of late the world avoided. The tenant was a brute—so went the estimate of the two Uists,—he kept poor ale, and thrashed his woman. Folk crossing the Long Ford now made their way by Gramisdale, and Creggans was left for weeks forlorn, with not so much as a drover, drunken and wandered, or a man with a pack, to bring it news of the out-world. When door or window opened it gulped the sifted sand. Round the sea-side of the walls of it the sand swept in drifts as if it had been snow, and so thick was on the window-sills that the lob-worm might have bred there. Sand was ankle-deep on the path that led to it; sand smothered the poor garden, where stunted kale never took heart; sand was in the tankards, sand in the meal. In windy days the place was in a constant stour; and in calm bright weather any one who saw it from the ford, sand-

grey like the skull of a ruined keep, was bound to think it desolate and forbidding.

"Christ! that I should come to this, that have had other chances and have seen elsewhere!" was the Sergeant's constant lamentation.

He would stand by the hour at his door, not hoping any more for custom, for that was plainly gone for good elsewhere, but speculating in a gloom upon the prospect. The sand, he thought, would creep up, and up, on Creggans Inn till it choked the windows, till it reached the roof, till it closed the chimney, and he and his wife were buried—the slut! that crept about the house in terror of his eye, long since beat to keep the place in order. For weeks on end of fine weather the ground about him was smooth as a board with the sand. One morning when he rose and looked out, he saw it trampled—people had ventured to the place, and in the dawning gazed at it and gone away again without knock or halloo, plainly thinking the inn abandoned! He felt at first when he looked at

the footsteps then like a man shipwrecked on an isle, and a ship gone past him when he was sleeping, and then he was in a fury of rage at what he thought an insult, all the worse because it was not so intended.

It was the more vexatious because from his door he could see the traffic of the Isles pass over the trough of Gramisdale. In his neighbourhood there was only the cursed life of the wastes. The bittern would be rising there, booming in the dusk—its voice an exhalation of the stagnant pools, the very breath of dreariness and decay; the whaup night and day went mourning there. That, perhaps, was not unusual: what he felt the most was when grey-lag geese, tenants more properly of the outer rocks, came in before Atlantic storms and cleaned the sand from their feathers almost at his door, manifestly thinking Creggans no better than a lifeless boulder of the tide.

And no farther off than a mile or two the world was in so fine a bustle! For hours at a time he would stand in blasphemy to see the open ford in a constant throng, crossed by cattle, horse, and sheep, by men and women for kirk or market, avoiding him and his inn as if he had a pest there.

He was standing at the door in that mood, the sand searching over the mouth of his shoes, when Dark John from Boisdale came in view of the inn. The Sergeant, with a seaman's eye, caught sight of him as soon as his head showed over the brae on the track that

so rarely knew a footstep, and he turned to bellow to his wife that some one came.

Dark John came forward, wearied to the bone by his travelling, dragging his feet through the sand, casting an astonished look at this forbidding tavern.

"Hail to the house!" said he, hawking dust from his throat and rubbing his smarting eyes. "O king! but this is the spot for an alehouse! Let a man of any parts and the right accommodation be here but for a day or two with the wind from a proper airt, and he would have a happy drouth that would drain every cask on the gantries."

"What is't you're wanting here?" said the Sergeant with a black brow, keeping his breadth in the door, for Dark John was not like to be the most desirable of customers.

"The sand from my throat first, and then a word with Corodale," said the visitor, chinking some coppers to show he had the wherewithal. The innkeeper let him in and beat the dust from the bottom of a can. "I have not clapped an eye on Corodale for a fortnight," said he.

"My own soul! You're not saying that?" cried John, astonished. "Och, may the devil take all bad counsel! Have I not been wearing the soles off my feet since yesterday in search of him, and his own servants said he was for certain in Benbecula? My grief! such walking! Not an open door on the way with the folk being at the shealings, and I

with hunger and thirst and sleepiness. Fill her again, master, fill her again ; that was no more than a damp spot on my thrapple, a dew on a kelp-kiln ! Faith ! your tankards are meat and drink ! If I'm not mistaken I gulped a spout-fish yonder. One would not need to go to the strand for bait in Creggans. Corodale not here ! ”

“Not since Saturday was a fortnight, I'm telling you, unless he sunk over the head in the sand-drift at the door,” said the innkeeper, who was in the bitter state where he could scoff at his own misfortunes. “It's no great odds to me except that it's a saving of money, for when Corodale's travelling this way his purse keeps house at home. I make no doubt if he's in Benbecula he's over at Uskavagh keeping his eye on the sloop, for fear the letters she brings across the Minch get into the wrong hands. He's an anxious man, is Corodale, about his letters.”

“Is he indeed ? Now, are you telling me ? ” said John, blinking into his can and pretending he knew nothing.

The innkeeper gave him but the one look, and coughed. “I need not tell you,” said he, “for you know very well already. You and Col are pretty chief, and it's there you're like myself.”

“So far as that goes——” said Dark John, and stopped with a troubled face, his hand in his waistcoat-pocket. “You do not happen to have the least bit dulse about you ? ” said he.

“No, man, I'm clean out of

the thing just at present,” said the innkeeper, who knew the old man's oddity ; “but I would not wonder if you got it growing against the gable of the house.”

“I must just be doing without it, then. I happened to take the droll notion for a taste. As for Corodale, I'll admit I'm in his reverence. You'll have heard about his diving for me over at Kintra last Michaelmas, and I'm like yourself, I would do him a good turn. I would have liked to see him ; for nothing else have I been walking all the night, except for an hour or two in a loft at Carnan.”

“You'll have news, likely, good man ? take another horn of the ale with me for company.”

“Your health ! I heard a matter yonder from a woman they call Bell Vore in Airinam-bo, Loch Eynort.”

“My wife's second cousin : if gossip were going, there was no surer place to get it.”

“It was that the other fellow, Duncan, was likely to be back soon, and I had the notion that the news might interest Master Col,” said Dark John, who knew how came the song to Boisdale.

The innkeeper put down his drink when it was half-way to his mouth. “What ! ” he cried, and swore most foully. “His brother coming back ! ” His pock-marked face was grey with astonishment and vexation. “Tut ! tut ! that was the thing I was always thinking of. Now what the devil should bring him back at this time ? A more un-

fortunate thing could not have happened."

"That's what I'm thinking myself," said the old man, with his eye on the innkeeper's wife, who passed through the kitchen. "Go out of this at once and feed the hens!" her husband bawled at her, and she fled at once, a most obedient woman.

The innkeeper spilled out more ale, turned the grit on his tongue, and fell in thought. To the door went John, dragged there in spite of himself to sniff the weed that festered in the sun. It set him craving. Over the sand he went, and the bent-grass, to the sea-edge. Some rocks stood out a little, the sea lapping the wreck that grew on them: out he went, wading over the knees, and plucked the dulse in a ravenous handful, cramming the sappy salt weed in his mouth and chewing it like a glutton. He might have been a monster of the deep, some uncanny soulless thing, in the form of man briefly borrowed for villainous devices, slobbering the stuff that feeds itself on ooze and slime. The sea-birds did not fear him,—they wheeled and squealed about his head. He came back to the inn refreshed, his pockets stuffed with the dripping dulse, and found the table roughly set for a meal.

"You'll have a bite with me," said the innkeeper, very genial. They ate in silence, Dark John's hunger gone, sparing even of the ale, and preferring the taste of the seaweed on his palate.

"Ay!" said the Sergeant, when they were done and his

wife had cleared the table, "and the other one's coming back, you're telling me? That's news! it's not to Col's advantage."

"Just so! just so! 'tis the truth you have there, and I'm here for nothing else but to tell him that: *mo thruagh!* that I must be hunting for him other wheres."

"No hurry for that,—he'll learn it fast enough if Bell Vore is in the secret." He leaned across to whisper, with a side-glance at the door for fear his wife was listening. "How are affairs at Boisdale?" he asked. "There's a white house yonder and a woman in it—eh? Does he come any speed?"

"If you have seen a buckie-whelk crawling, that's him for the speed of him. So the women tell me. Praise Mary! I'm a plain man myself, and no judge of sweethearting, though many a one's been after me; and one no later gone than yesterday—bad death to her! Unless he stuns Herself with an oar, and drags her to the altar before she gets her senses back, she'll never be made to marry him. And that's a thing beyond me; for look at the fine, big, gallant fellow!"

The innkeeper rubbed his chin and scanned the face before him, wondering to what lengths the old rogue could be trusted. If Col could put his trust in him, surely he could do so too?

"There's a lump of money in it," he ventured. "It's likely you'll have heard?"

"Before you were born, good man. Was I not at the shift-

ing of it fifty years ago from Arisaig, and myself a halflin lad?"

"So they tell me; I have heard Col mention it. It's a pity he comes such poor speed — particularly if his brother Duncan's likely to come back so soon before there's anything settled. Twenty thousand! a fine round hearty figure."

"I saw it myself with my own two eyes, and no one else's, running out on the deck of Colin-Calum-Angus's skiff like cockles from a basket. The sound of it, I'll warrant you, was noble."

"O Lord! 'tis a pity Col comes such poor speed, and you and myself so willing to help him," said the innkeeper. "Do you think there is no chance for him to marry the girl?"

"No more than there is for myself, and I am not thinking to ask her."

The innkeeper rose to shut the door; looked from his window over the sand, from a custom that might very well be done without, to see if any traveller came, and drew his stool closer to Dark John's. He spoke fast, like one that burst with a project that commanded every passion.

"We're a bonny pair of fools!" said he; "egging on this Col to a fortune he has so little chance of getting, and would neither share with us nor thank us for if he got. Duncan's coming back, you're telling me; very well! that settles it for Col, and it's an ill wind that sits in nobody's sail. Are you hearing? The money's yonder somewhere, and she's the only one

knows where it is, for the priest himself said so. What's to hinder two well-deserving fellows like ourselves—eh?"

Dark John saw the speaker's thought,—ground his teeth through the sea-weed, felt the horror afresh of Barra deep, and made up his mind. It was plain Col Corodale's interest was here to be protected.

"And how would we be getting it, Master Sergeant?" he asked. "Tell me that!"

"Fifteen years I followed the sea and five was in the Royals. I know women, on my soul, better than any man that walks Long Isle sand."

"Then you know the one thing beats me, myself, Dark John! She and the sea—my loss! they're terrible! terrible! terrible!"

"Put yon one before me here and me with my hand on her——" the innkeeper clenched his hands together with a shake of them as if he had a thing to crush, his pock-marked face purple, his eyeballs bloodied at the white. "What's this Corodale but a miser? I could knife him often for the way he scrapes about his feet for ha'pence and no need for it, for there is no man wealthier between the Barra Head and Berneray. MacNeil's Treasure jingles every bit as well whenever it is just now as it would do if Col got hold of it. Little we would see of it if he married the girl and handled the stuff to-morrow."

The old man chewed his dulse and said never a word, but looked like one that sympathised.

"Mine is the seaman's motto and he on the last spar, Every man for himself. Are you hearing, old fellow? What's to hinder the pair of us taking a turn at fortune, seeing Corodale has had a fair chance and made nothing at all of it?"

"I'm not of the marrying kind myself," said John, "and next door there's your mistress."

"Twenty thousand," said the innkeeper, paying no heed to this humour, "and in a place where the priest of Boisdale says it will lie till Doomsday. The wonder's on me that you could see it once and can sleep at night without an envy to be handling it."

The old man blinked and nodded his head, like one that had a new idea given to him.

"Bring her here," said the Sergeant, "bring her here!

Give me half an hour of her in Creggans."

"My God, not murder!" cried the old man, staggered.

"Marriage, nor murder; are you taking me for a fool? I'm telling you I know women: half an hour of her in Creggans — not a second more. I'm sick of this Benbecula; there's nothing to lose in leaving it in a hurry but a cheap burial in sand."

"Just that!" said the old man; "but getting her here?"

"I had her once before when she came to Dermosary's burial; the room's up there she lay in. Thinks I at the time, 'twenty thousand pounds on my wife's bolster!' I could have her here by the week's end and the money ours by Monday if I had yourself to help me."

"I would not be the man to see you beat," said John.

CHAPTER XXV.—THE KIDNAPPING OF ANNA.

So Col saw the sloop on Monday beating to the south, and wondered where she went to, for his partner the Sergeant had mentioned nothing of a trip so soon. But jib-boom was a skipper given to vagaries: he would shift his port on any jovial fancy that might come to him; the rumour of a wedding in any seaward part of Barra or of Uist was enough to set him hoisting at his anchor or throwing from the pawls and spreading sail in prospect of diversion. "A dancing somewhere, or a drunken wager," thought her half-owner as the ship lay over toward Boisdale Loch with

every stitch of her straining. He looked at her with discontent from Corodale Hill, grudging the chafe of cord and canvas that cost good money. If he could have guessed her object he would have cursed to himself on the hill more heartily than he did; but he was still the persevering lover (as the pipe-tune goes), and this new venture at the Treasure of MacNeil was out of his cognisance.

All the Hebrid Islands lay that day in a feverish heat that lessened the bounds of the thousand lakes, and made the rivers and burns whisper where

ordinarily they cried : the sea itself had a look of shrinking, only the mountains swelled, and when at the fall of night the sloop ran through the Sound of Eriskay, its rocks and skerries seemed more numerous than they had ever done before. She cast her anchor in Boisdale Bay. Dark John, hovering like a bird of bad luck behind the townships, watching for her coming where himself would attract no attention from the few folk left at home there while the general world was at the shealings, saw her with a satisfaction.

Anna was in chapel, almost the only woman there. A couple of lug-sail boats from Castlebay were in the harbour that would otherwise have been vacant ; some of their crew came up the hill, dipped calloused fingers in the holy water, and entered awkwardly on tiptoe, squeezed into seats here and there in the dim chapel, indulged but a single glance at the lady on her knees, and then began muttering their Gaelic prayers. Perhaps they had not so much to pray for as Anna,—at least their prayers were sooner done, and they had another glance at her as they left the chapel to set out on their evening toil.

She was herself the last to go. A troubled world waited her at the threshold, for up from the west, sudden and enormous, had come a cloud that raced the natural night-fall ; and she had scarcely reached the shelter of the presbytery when thunder, horrible,

abrupt, burst over Benmore. There was but one wild peal of it, that seemed to shake the island. "Poor Ludovick !" she thought ; "he is to have a wild night coming from Kilbride."

The night was warm, but she built a fire in readiness for his coming though he might not be for hours yet, put out dry clothing for him, and set a table for his supper, taking delight in these domestic offices, as if she were to entertain a company. There had been but the single thunder-peal, yet the living things that haunt shore and moor were terrified. Sea-gulls that had been quarrelling before the curing-sheds had disappeared, plover and whaup were dumb. The fowls that Anna kept behind the house ran frightened under the thatch-eaves of the byre, where a calf lowed pitifully, as if it felt some dread of the wide mysterious universe it had never seen.

She drew the curtains of the little window, and the last glance from it showed the anchor-light of the sloop that had taken Duncan from her, and as yet had brought back no word of comfort. It set her sadly thinking. Her hopes since he had gone were centred there, in the *Happy Return*,—the very name had a cheerful omen. If she could find no excuse for him when her pride was wounded first, she could readily now have found a score. He might be ill ; he might be too far off to let her know so soon ; he might, indeed, have written already, and her letter might be on the way, for in

these days the written communication came to the Islands in ways precarious.

She sewed, she knitted, she read; no occupation could very long command her mind that night, so full she was of a distressing apprehension. Some trouble menaced: it was as one feels that wakes at morning having gone to bed with grief, and, seeing the cheerful common day, cannot for a little remember what the sorrow was, but feels its pain. They say in the Isles when such a spirit seizes one the danger is for others: Anna was bound to think that something threatened one or other of those she loved. There was a keepsake she wore at her neck—a Virgin Mary nut, the bean of the Moluccas—that Duncan had picked up on the Long Ford that morning he had spent with her there, and had mounted in silver; her fingers often went to it for comfort. Boisdale presbytery had never seemed so solitary before, horribly silent in the stupor of the night; the air heavy, the night oppressed with some tremendous purpose.

What came oftenest to her mind was that a person walked outside.

It was not that she heard anything, but the conviction grew that some one walked and some one waited. She went to the window and drew back the curtain, but nothing was to be seen when she looked out except the empty night, the light of Jib-boom's sloop its only star. She had just made sure of its vacancy when a loud knock

came to the door. She stood speechless, doubting her senses; till the rapping was repeated. This was human life; she boldly opened the door. At first she was dismayed to see the man who stood there—Dark John, in the porch, his hands in his pockets, a shred of dulse in his cheek, and his jaws busy. He met her questioning look with an evasive eye.

"Take my excuses, mistress," he said quickly, "I saw the light——"

"Master Ludovick is from home, John," said Anna, thinking he had been sent by some one for her brother. "I hope no one is ill."

"Not a bit, not a bit; we have all our very good health in Boisdale, and little else except that same to brag of. There was just a notion came to me yonder, when I saw the light in the window, that I heard Jib-boom make mention of some letters that were for you on the sloop, in Master Duncan of Corodale's writing."

A great joy gushed in every vein of her—ice gone, the barriers broken, the happy river running free again.

"For me, John! Are you sure? Come in, come in!" She took his arm, and almost pulled him into the room, that she might see his face more clearly, and assure herself that there was no deceit. His face was like a rock, his eye with no sincerity, and he chewed like an animal, but he was beautiful there and then for Anna.

"Jib-boom was on the quay awhile ago: you know our

ways in Boisdale, mistress; he got gossiping and mentioned it."

"He would have been better employed, the wretch, to fetch me in my letters," cried Anna. "And now, I suppose, I must keep my patience till the morning."

"Faith! it's myself would have taken a small boat and gone out for them, if that was all that was in it, mistress; but Jib-boom had a message for yourself or Master Ludovick. Did I not clean forget his reverence was over in Kilbride, or I would not have troubled you? When I saw the light, I thought to myself he might take a turn out in the *Ron*, and that I could be taking the oars for him."

His voice was drowned in a thunder-peal that burst frightfully close at hand and clanged across the island. Rain fell in a sudden torrent, drumming on the dry hard ground; the house was full of noisy pattering. But Anna heard thunder nor rain, so loud her heart beat at the man's intelligence.

"I will go out myself, John," she said, determined, rolling up her hair that had been hanging in a pleat to her waist, her face rosy, her lips shaken with gladness. "I will be ready in a minute if you will row me out to the vessel."

"*Dhia!* it is impossible!" cried the man, himself abashed at the thunder. "The rain! just listen to the rain."

"Oh dear! poor Ludovick! how wet he will be! It is so good of you to come and tell

me, John. We have been expecting some letters: they are important. The skipper's message may demand immediate attention, and a drop or two of rain will not keep me from learning what it is to-night. If you will sit here I will be ready in three minutes."

She picked up a candlestick, and ran up-stairs with her great delight. "Och! isn't she agile, now—the creature?" said Dark John, and he sat with an absent eye, too deep engrossed in his project to look about him in the unfamiliar gentility of Father Ludovick's dwelling-place. So loud, so often, the thunder roared, so heavy the rain fell, that at first he was afraid the girl might baulk at the adventure. This storm was a misfortune: if she lost courage and forwent her resolution, a very fine scheme, for the time at least, was a failure. He was assured when he heard her come down the stair again, humming the air of a song.

"The element's there!" said he to himself. "MacNeils! MacNeils! weather is in the blood of them: this one, or I'm mistaken, would swim to the sloop if a small boat was not handy. Are they not all alike, the women? for the prospect of a man they take the fancy for, they would walk to the Worst Place."

He had some fear for himself now, so wild the night was sounding. Anna saw it in his face when she came downstairs wrapped for her adventure.

"On my own soul, mistress," said he with his knees to the

fire and grudging to leave the comfort of it, "I'm not fond of the task for you. Master Ludovick will be blaming me for taking you out in such a night."

"It's the other way, and I am taking you," said Anna. "If we lose no time about it, we may easily be back before my brother."

A thunderbolt burst above Benmore with a sound that could be no greater if the mountain shattered. Dark John ducked his head, with eyes for a second full of horror.

"By God!" said he, "did I not think it was the world's end, yon? and myself scarce ready. I wish I had not troubled you. Faith! there may be no more than words in Jib-boom's story, and no letters at all."

"What!" cried Anna with a sinking heart, but saw in a moment it was the coward spoke. "That settles it: if the sail was to Barra itself instead of out into the bay, I would not put it off another minute. Come down and launch the *Ron* with me, and I will go myself if you do not care to come."

She would listen to no protest; she went out in the darkness with no ears for him and all eyes for the light of the sloop, that to-night was more sweet for her than any star as it shone through the blurring rain. The thunder rolled more distant to the north over Eaval mount; in a flash of lightning the chapel jumped to the eye, miraculous, steadfast, unafraid

of the furies that terrorise mankind; it would have given Anna courage if she had it not by nature and the eagerness of her object. Very warm and thick the rain fell from the warring heavens like goutts of blood; the isle was full of scents, most marvellous fresh, most clear, scents of myrtle and heather-tip and flowers that in the common day have perfume only for the bee.

Anna went quickly through the darkness, the old man at her heels.

The sloop, when they reached her, was sound asleep, the gluck of the tide at her counter. A sea-bird rose with a cry from a spar, but no one hailed. Dark John climbed on board and crept to a companion aft. He stamped lightly on the deck-light, chewed dulse, and set a bleared, abstracted eye on the lamp that swung above the chains. Now, the thunder was remote and muttering, the rain completely gone, and in the cordage a cool breeze hummed. No one answered; he tried again, and some one moved below. There was a snap of steel, the deck-light glowed, and by-and-by the companion opened.

"It is I that am in it," said Dark John in a whisper. "She's with me, yon one."

"Oh, now the devil!" said Jib-boom, standing in the doorway in his breeches, shivering. "And I so snug! What put it in your head to choose a night like this? I made sure you would not trouble us till to-morrow or later maybe, and I

hear of a notable merriment in Kintra for Wednesday. By the Book! what thundering was yonder!"

"It had to be to-night, or maybe not at all," said the old man. "Her brother went to Kilbride in the morning. On with your boots briskly, brave man!"

Jib-boom drew sea-boots on, still grumbling, and at the business heard the voice of Anna. She called from the *Ron* she sat in, "You have some message for me, John tells me."

"Bad death on me if I care for the business," muttered Jib-boom, stepping to the bulwark. "You're there," said he; "give me your hand," and helped her to the deck.

"I'm sorry to disturb you," said she.

"It's of no account," he assured her; "I meant to call at the white house in the morning, but seeing you're here, I'll ask you to step into my cabin." She hung back a little dubious. "The men are forward," he explained, "and I'm here myself, in state, like Mac-Neil of Barra; at least we'll need a light to see what we are doing."

She stepped under the low companion and descended, the skipper close behind her. Dark John stayed on deck. The painter of the *Ron* was fastened to the rail; he loosened and threw it off. The boat drifted slowly from the side of the sloop; he could hear her, though he could not see her.

"O king!" said he; "will there not be searching of the sea to-morrow?"

(*To be continued.*)

BROWN BROTHERS, CRICKETERS.

I.

A MODICUM of self-conceit probably lurks in every human breast; and so long as it is content to lurk, and is not blatant or obtrusive, a little self-conceit may well pass as a venial fault. It is, however, part and parcel of the perversity of human nature that conceit, not unfrequently missing a more legitimate mark, expends its energy on an imaginary rather than on an existent or positive excellence.

In the county town of Barkworth, nearly half a century ago, were residing two twin brothers, Alfred and Arthur Brown. They were brewers by vocation, and turned out of the Lion Brewery right good beer—as beer went in those more primitive times, when respectable brewers used English malt and hops and little more besides. And, provided that the publican was reasonably honest and not tempted to over-adulteration, the thirsty wayfarer was fortunate who chanced on an inn where “Brown Brothers’” liquor was found on tap.

Not being a twin myself, I know not whether a more generous share of fraternal affection exists between twin than between ordinary brothers. But in this case, for all intents and purposes, Nature, so often prodigal of her various gifts to larger families, seemed to have given to the Brown

brothers, the only children of their long-deceased parents, share and share alike of one body and one mind. Like Ægeon’s sons in the “Comedy of Errors,” they were—

“The one so like the other
As could not be distinguish’d but by
names.”

And whereas both names had the same initial letter, even there the distinction was not over and above complete.

An uncle, into whose guardianship the untimely death of their parents had thrown the boys, had done his duty by them kindly and conscientiously; and as, fortunately, there had been a sufficiency of means for a liberal education, they had passed through the stages of public-school and university training, and emerged from the ordeal with respectability rather than brilliancy of success, and, it may be added, with their mutual resemblance and goodwill towards each other in no way abated. At school, indeed, they had got—and in the long-run this did them no harm—rather more than their fair share of kicks. For where a big boy had it in his mind to kick Arthur, and, for all he knew to the contrary, might find himself kicking Alfred, it was obviously sound policy to kick the pair—kicking being to the operator a more expeditious

and satisfying process than verbal cross-examination. But in matters of college discipline later on, compensating justice decreed that a soft-hearted and short-sighted dean, erring on the side of mercy, more than once forbore to gate Arthur or Alfred, as the case might be, for non-attendance at morning chapel, because the other brother was in evidence, and might—for all the dean's spectacles told him—be the imagined culprit.

In the cricket-field, where the brothers enjoyed some notoriety, and might even be called the mainstays of an inferior college XI., there was so far a dissimilarity between the pair, that while both were left-handed bowlers and right-handed batsmen, Arthur shone in the former and Alfred in the latter capacity. Owing, however, to that perversity of nature to which allusion has already been made, Arthur, on his day a really good fast bowler, taking his successes in that department as matters of chance or as arguing incapacity on the part of the opposing batsmen, felt infinite pride on rare occasions when by dint of hard and unscientific hitting he managed to knock up a respectable score; while Alfred, whose patient defence enabled him to head the batting averages of his college for three successive years, believed in his heart of hearts that his powers as a slow bowler had never been properly appreciated. It was a curious coincidence that whereas Alfred had played, though with indifferent suc-

cess, in the Freshmen's match, Arthur Brown, comparatively unknown to fame till his third year, therein came within measurable distance of having a distinct trial for the University XI., although, as luck would have it, it eventually fell to his lot to receive in lieu of the trial a severe and condemnatory message from the captain, a gentleman whose notoriously quick temper and capacity for making brief pungent remarks were so far overshadowed by general amiability that he was distinctly the most popular character of his day in Oxford.

This is, however, wholly immaterial to my present story. Suffice it to say, the cricket which had passed muster as creditable at Oxford was accounted superlatively good in the county town of Barkworth, where, at the conclusion of their university career, the twins shortly embarked their brains and capital in an old-established brewery which happened to come into the market in the nick of time, and that captain of a local team who had secured for the nonce the services of either one of the brothers, reckoned that he had done a good day's hard work for his side. It may readily be imagined that, where the cricket was of no high order of merit, Arthur, the bowler, made in the course of the season a sufficiency of runs to justify his self-satisfaction in his powers as a bat; and that Alfred, the batsman, was occasionally successful in securing a fair amount of wickets with his very slow and, truth to say,

very indifferent left-hand deliveries.

It must be accounted on the side of good fortune that a good deal of confusion between the identity of the two

brothers was obviated by the simple circumstance that it was wellnigh impossible for the two sole managers of a busy house to take an easy on the same day.

II.

It was Roger from Yorkshire who had originally brought forward the proposition which, following a desultory conversation, had been carried *nem. con.* by the touring members of the All England XI. who had met together in the parlour of the Cat and Fiddle at Flavell, the largest town in the western division of Barkworthshire, to discuss the situation. There was no gainsaying the fact that the situation was serious, and one that called for immediate and drastic measures. In times past it had been found to meet all requirements if eleven playing members, with an elderly umpire chucked in, started on a fortnight's tour. True, the chapter of accidents, and now and again the chapter of hospitality, had to be reckoned with, but the one emergency-man had been found to constitute a sufficient margin. For it was their common practice to choose an umpire known to be ready and able to figure in the field in a case of absolute necessity. And it was felt on all sides that where the profits might be expected to work out at something between fifty and sixty pounds a week, twelve people were quite enough to provide for.

Evilly, however, had blown

the wind to the All England XI. in the second match of their opening week in the county of Barkworthshire. They had started well by winning their match against a Twenty-two of the town of Barkworth—a Twenty-two aided, of course, by the standard quantity of three professional bowlers, men who made an honest livelihood in the summer months by figuring perhaps once or twice as emergency members of the All England or the United All England Elevens, and quite twenty times as well in so-called local Twenty-twos throughout the length and breadth of England; hard-bitten, middle-aged, and sober-living men, each one of whom might be relied upon to keep up an end all day, and to contribute in one or other innings a double figure towards that seventy or eighty runs which passed muster as a creditable total when compiled against such redoubtable opponents. The Twenty-two of Barkworth had played the game quite according to the orthodox fashion. For the match had lasted out well into the third day: Alfred Brown, the pet batsman of the town, had made "a magnificent score of twenty-five runs" in one innings, and the more usual 0 in

the other; the three paid men had rung the changes of the bowling, and shared the eighteen wickets of the A.E.E. which had fallen; and the gate-money had come up to expectation.

But in the following match against a Twenty-two of Barkworth Town and County a change had come over the spirit of the dream. There had, indeed, been no lack of excitement; for the Eleven, playing carelessly and with bad luck in their first innings, found themselves confronted at the outset of their second knock with the rather formidable total of one hundred and thirty runs, to be got on a broken wicket against moderately good bowling and a keen fielding side. Those were days, however, when a broken wicket did not of necessity create a panic, and steadily enough did those heroes of a hundred fights buckle to their task. But the fates were unpropitious, and what with two men run out, and a doubtful l.b.w. given in the bowler's favour by the West umpire, it fell out that when the rival teams adjourned for luncheon at one o'clock six wickets were down for forty runs. After lunch, however, came a prolonged stand, while Yorkshire Roger, ably assisted by a rising Nottinghamshire star, coupling steady defence with an occasional cut to the boundary, fairly collared the bowling, and in eighty minutes added sixty runs to the score. Desperate diseases, in the cricket-field or elsewhere, call for desperate remedies, and when old Joe

Proctor, who practically managed the side, at the conclusion of his third consecutive maiden over called for a halt, and solemnly addressed Arthur Brown, the titular captain, the worthy fellow doubtless felt that he was suggesting what was more akin to a kill than a cure policy.

"I'll tell 'ee what it is, Muster Brown," quoth the veteran, "us don't seem to be getting no forwarder, not no ways. I'm done my level best mysel, and I can't bowl neither on 'em out; and Dick there, he've sweated and he've sweated, and he can't bowl 'em out, no nor can't Tom Paling neither. So if I was you, and captin' of this 'ere side, danged if I wouldn't take the ball mysel, and see if I couldn't mess 'em out."

Nothing daunted by the depreciatory suggestion as to his capabilities, Arthur Brown followed the advice thus candidly given, and never was change of bowling more speedily successful for the fielding or more disastrous for the opposing side. For, bowling at a terrific pace, and with a most uncanny swirl in the air, in the short space of three overs he had not only finished the match, but had put two of his opponents practically *hors de combat* for some days to come,—Fred Anson, the fast bowler of his side, having a finger so badly out as to incapacitate him for either bowling, batting, or fielding, and Yorkshire Roger himself receiving a severe crack on the knee-cap. "As'll stop your dancing for a week or

more, my beauty," grimly remarked Joe Proctor, in whose heart was rankling a sense of injury because he had been hooted by the crowd for making a present of four runs to the opposing side when the cunning Yorkshireman had tricked him into hurling at the wicket by dashing a yard or two down the pitch under the pretence of stealing a run.

The Eleven had taken their sudden discomfiture in good part; but as the match had come to an abrupt conclusion a full hour earlier in the day than they had bargained for, and they had no particular fancy for being crowed over in the tap-room by a vulgarly triumphant throng of cobblers, they hurried up and caught an afternoon train for Flavell—a large market-town in the far west of the county, where they were due to play their first match of the following week.

And now at 7 P.M., after a hearty meal, they had assembled in the parlour of the Cat and Fiddle under the presidency of their captain, to map out a plan of campaign for the Monday. Various suggestions had been made, only to be negatived by the captain, whose opinion carried almost as much weight as did his two legs,—for our Roger had begun to put on flesh in those days, and pulled down the scale at seventeen stone,—and only two self-evident propositions found favour on all sides, namely, that by hook or by crook an eleventh man must be forthcoming on Monday morn-

ing, and that he must be a bowler.

"Shall us telegraph to old George Farrant?" had suggested one man.

"I reckon as t'owd Gearge, he've gotten a better jaub on, lad. He'm tootoring a yearl or a dook, or a lard o' sorts. Foive poonds a-week he's takking, and all groob foond," explained the president, and the idea of trying to tempt George to leave such a lap of luxury at once fell to the ground.

"There's that there Billy Johnson as might hap to come," struck in the young Nottinghamshire player.

"We dean't waant noan o' your Billy Johnsons along wi' us, if it's all one to you, young mon."

"And for why? I reckon as Billy's the best bowler in England on his day, all said and done," retorted the Notts man.

"Happen he be, and happen he beant; not as I'm going to say a woord ageanst him being a foine bowler. But this how it is aloang o' Billy. Foorst place, he'd arst a matter of foive poonds for cummyng, and groob and treain and all. And then he'd bowl o' won Moonday and mebbe teak ten or a scoore o' wickets. And then one o' they chops'd say, 'Weel bowled, Muster Johnson,' he'd say; 'coom and ha' a drink aloang wi' me. What shall it be?' 'Glass of poort woine hot, wi' a dash of room in't,' t'owd Billy'd say. And then he'd have another aloang wi' summun else, and then an-

oather. Foorteen poort woines hot wi' room I seen him lap doon wan a top o' t'ooother, as he cooldn't haud his head oop next day."

There was a murmur of assent from all sides, the redoubtable Billy's capacities for imbibing being almost as well known as his magnificent powers of bowling.

"Let's see how we stand for bowling" (the new speaker favoured a pronunciation which made the word rhyme with "howling"). "Let's see, Roger," he repeated, "there's me, and there's Bill Steers, and — and — who's to come arter? Here's Fred laid by so as he'll not bowl."

"Nor bat neither," interpolated the individual alluded to, who had a higher opinion of his own prowess as a batsman than his colleagues were wholly inclined to indorse. To be sure, as at one period of the season he had only been out once in the course of a month, and had scored seven runs in all, there might have been undeveloped capacity lurking in the background.

As Fred was known to be touchy on the point, two or three men who wanted to smile prudently buried their heads in their tankards; but the original speaker took no notice whatever of the interruption.

"Canst bowl thyself, come Monday, dost think?" he proceeded, addressing himself more directly to the captain.

The Yorkshireman shook his head gloomily.

"Shean't do no booling till Thoorsday, and mebbe not then

noother," he remarked. "I keeps on a-roobbing and a-roobbing, but t' bruise weant ooom oot, not nohow. I doot I ceant staart to roon up t' wicket."

"Hoot, man!" struck in the fast bowler, at all times inclined to resent the fact that against local twenty-twos Roger's lobs accounted in the course of the week for quite as many wickets as his own deliveries, and on the present occasion in a distinctly unamiable frame of mind, partly because his finger was aching smartly, and partly because his previous remark had fallen rather flat. "I could bowl stoof like yourn standing on one leg, wi'out no run."

A roar of hoarse laughter was succeeded by a still louder roar when the Yorkshireman, in no way discomposed by the attack, quietly observed that "soom on us as had to do t' scooting moight waant four legs to roon after t' ball, if t'owd Fred staarted oonderhond booling."

It was at this juncture that the umpire, a staid and solemn individual, who was commonly content in ordinary life to follow up his cricket-field habit of not speaking until he was appealed to, offered the first remark that he had made during the session.

"I knows all along as old Roger there he've gotten summat up his sleeve, as he keeps on a contradikking and a contradikking, and never starts nothing. Now then, out wi't, Roger, man!"

Seeing that he had at last got the full attention of the house, the Yorkshireman now

winked solemnly at the umpire, and took a long pull at his tankard.

"What I saays noo is this. Reckon as we've had a toidy lot of boolers agean us this week. There were old Joe Proctor as is a very deacent sort of mon, and Tom Paling as has booled in his daay as well as heare a wan and theare a wan, and Dick Austin as'll go on chooking her oop soaft and streaight and steardy for mebbe foor hoors at a toime, and"—a long pause—"there's wan moore besides. Noo then, them as is in favour of paying Joe Proctor, or Tom Paling, or Dick Austin three poonds beloike, and groob and 'xpenses for this wan match, haud oop hands, I say!"

Not a hand went up.

"Wool, then, it'll have to be t'ooother yoong chop as'll break as many boans as stoumps, weant ask for pay, and mebbe give us a toidy soobscription and all."

Small wonder that the Yorkshireman's proposition was received with unlimited applause. Even the umpire so far forgot the solemnity attaching to his profession as to relax into a broad grin at Roger's suggestion of enlisting a recruit who, apart from the possibility of his doing yeoman service to the side, might even feel himself called upon to pay, rather than to be paid, for the privilege of playing. And the applause was renewed when Roger briefly announced that he had so far discounted the situation as to enlist the services of "t' yoong laidy at t'

bar" to make a fair copy of the letter which was yet to be concocted for "t' yoong mon."

It may be remembered that Mr Samuel Weller, junior, found in the concoction of a letter a task of no mean difficulty, and that his distinguished auditor and progenitor thought it necessary to fortify himself for the labours of criticism not only by the "mollifying" influence of tobacco, but by the ordering of "a double glass of the invariable."

Similarly now the company present lighted fresh pipes and ordered fresh tankards as indispensable preliminaries to posing as critics of Roger's epistolary effort, during the course of which a good many wrong words and letters had, after the manner of Samuel Weller, to be smeared out with the little finger.

Even the opening words of the epistle provoked some discussion and sundry little differences of opinion, before Roger's "Yoong mon," and the umpire's rather involved sentence about "us members of the All England Eleven" and "'spectful compliments" were finally rejected in favour of the Notts professional's suggestion of—

"Honoured Sir,
Dear Mr Brown."

Two points in favour of the young gentleman's presumably superior style were that he was last from school, and that whereas his father filled the office of parish clerk, the son might be regarded as having moved in a more or less literary circle.

The succeeding paragraph, which ran, "We was all on us vera well pleased with your foine booling yeesterday," was subjected to sundry, and, as the event proved, rather unfortunate amendments.

"I weren't for one, nor weren't thou, Roger, seemingly," objected Fred Anson, whose aching finger was providing any sensation rather than that of pleasure.

"Roight, lad," assented Roger, scratching his head vigorously with the unbusiness end of the pen, in search of a better rendering of the passage. Once again the solution of the difficulty emanated from the Notts man.

"Thou dostn't want another of the same sort, dost thou, Fred?" and as the fast bowler shook his head, "or thou, Roger? Ye'm both had eneugh."

"And to spear," heartily assented Roger.

"Then thou canst say as ivery one was vera well satisfied," and the little finger having been called into play, "satisfied" was duly substituted.

"I wad na say bowling,"—to rhyme again with "howling,"—suggested the umpire. "Happen as the gemman may think as he can bat, seeing as how he knocked up twenty runs o' Monday."

"So un did and arl. I moinds t' yoong mon now," replied Roger—like the rest of the side, profoundly ignorant of the bewildering fact that there were two cricketing Browns at Barkworth, partners in a joint-stock personal-

ity, "and neaver booled a ball in t' match noother."

"No," chimed in more than one voice, "it were old Joe and his lot done all the bowling as there were." And after one more apparently unimportant amendment the paragraph thus amended was approved of: "We was all vera well satisfied with your fine play this week."

Finally the letter, duly amended and copied by "t' yoong laidy at t' bar," whose notions both of grammar and orthography differed in immaterial points from those held by Yorkshire Roger, ran as follows:—

"Honoured Sir,—

"DEAR MR BROWN,— We were all very well satisfied with your fine play this week, and as you were somewhat rough on some of our bowlers, we take the liberty to ask whether you will take a turn along with us and play for the All England Eleven against a Twenty-two of West Barkworthshire on Monday next and two following days.

Signed on behalf of the A.E.E.

ROGER ITCHINSON, *Captain.*

"CAT AND FIDDLE INN, FLAVELL.

"Please telegraph reply."

The young lady at the bar had been duly rewarded by Roger with the promise of a kiss, and the letter had been duly wafered but not yet stamped, when the parlour door was of a sudden thrown violently open, and a high-

pitched voice, redolent of unmistakable Barkworth accent, inquired—

“Did any of you chaps here ever hear tell of Muster Brown of Barkworth?”

“Dom’d if use eaint!” promptly replied Roger, startled out of all sense of propriety by the suddenness of the apparition.

“Well, then, they do say down Barkworth way that he could put all them as calls themselves the All England Eleven up agin a net and bowl them down like so many ninepins.”

It was evident that this dam-natory statement was partly intended to promote the better entertainment of two or three young gentlemen who now tittered audibly in the passage. For the speaker, a young, pimpled-faced grocer’s assistant, who, taking advantage of a Saturday afternoon off, had run down to Flavell with a market ticket in the same train as the Eleven, after dining not wisely but too well with some relations in the town, had tempted two or three other choice spirits to look in at the Cat and Fiddle for half an hour on the way to the station for the express purpose of hearing the recognised wit of the party “take a rise” out of the cricketers.

To him now, as occasionally to other practical jokers, the unexpected happened. For in an instant the burly Yorkshireman, rising to the situation, had exclaimed—

“Coom in, lod, and tak’ a cheair, and tell us a’ aboot it!” and, by way of backing

the invitation, dexterously inserted one hand into the surprised youth’s coat-collar, and slamming the door with the other, dumped the all-unwilling guest down into his own vacant chair with such energy that every tooth in his head fairly rattled. Then, when Fred Anson, equally prompt, had locked the door, Roger with assumed ferocity commenced to cross-examine the latest importation, adding seriousness to the situation by taking down his answers in a black pocket-book.

Where was now the short-lived pot-valiancy, where now the ready tongue which, a few minutes back, had been rehearsing the imagined dialogue to his applauding comrades? Not Dolon in the clutches of grim Diomed more cowed, more prolific of abject apology, than the wretched grocer’s boy deprived of his supporters, a prisoner whose “knees with terror shook.”

“Noo, then, lod,” was the opening question, “beest thoo toon-crier? Or”—after a pause—“beest thoo yoong fool as ha’ travelled thoirty moile or moor joost to inscolt twelve better men than thoyself? Give an accoont of thoyself.”

Slowly, tremulously, reluctantly trickled forth the required information, blended with copious apology.

The matter was not one of malice prepense; the journey to Flavell was a monthly outing; the traveller’s name was Brench, a young man in the employ of Cross Brothers, who kept the large shop in Fleet

Street just opposite to the Lion Brewery; he was not naturally a vicious or even impertinent youth, but just now, perhaps, an extra glass of beer had flown to his head, and besides — it was only a bit of fun.

"Foon!" ejaculated Roger; "thoo't ha' foon enough afore thoo's done wi't. T'owd father, he alwaays sod as foon and fool wore aunly ported by wan letter, and theer wore alwaays rood meade for fool's book. I've gotten no rood hondy, but theer's my owd bot in t' corner. Noo, lods, shall us poot 'un across table and gi' 'un two apoice wi' owd bot, joost for foon? There's eleven on us not coonting t' oompire, as shall be sool joodge o' fair ploy."

The team fully entered into the spirit of the thing, and there was only one dissentient voice, that of the umpire, who pleaded that, as Fred Anson using one hand could hardly be expected to do justice to the occasion, he himself should be allowed to "play" while Fred stood umpire.

This remark, offered with all apparent sincerity, finally completed the proposed victim's discomfiture. Throwing dignity to the four winds, he fell on his knees at Roger's feet, and literally howled for mercy.

"Whoy, I thought thoo waantedst foon," said the Yorkshireman, winking at the company, and therewith, tempering justice with mercy, he proceeded to dictate alternative terms of peace. The "yoong mon" was to undertake to return to Bark-

worth with all convenient haste, and immediately on his arrival to deliver into Mr Brown's own hands the all-important letter, and to promise that he himself or the recipient of the letter should telegraph a reply at the earliest possible hour on Monday morning; and the penalty held over his head, if the above conditions were not faithfully fulfilled, was a visit to Messrs Cross's establishment in the course of Monday morning from Roger, "wi' t'owd bot" and instant execution of the deferred sentence.

Out of the Cat and Fiddle, like an arrow from a bow, flew the late prisoner, thus suddenly and beyond all expectation liberated; like a hunted animal, he dived into the corner of an empty carriage, where — for fortune favours fools, and an extra glass of heady ale induces somnolence — he slept like a top until, with other rubbish, he was cleared out of the carriage at Barkworth. There rudely awakened, and with the fear of Roger's "bot" in his soul, he hurried post-haste to the Lion Brewery, and commenced to sound so continuous a midnight peal on the residence bell that he brought Alfred Brown, captain of the local fire-brigade, downstairs in his night-shirt.

"Where's the fire?"

"Nowhere that I knows of; but here's a letter from the All England Eleven, and, please, you're to telegraph an answer first thing on Monday morning."

"Telegraph an answer?" repeated Alfred, only half awake.

"Yes, sir; or shall I?"

"Oh, I'll telegraph. Good night," exclaimed Alfred, who, having mechanically opened the letter and run through its contents, was in a moment much more on the alert.

Whether the young grocer could be expected to know the difference between the brothers Brown in the uncertain light, or whether in his

frame of mind he could even recall the fact that there were two brothers, remain matters of uncertainty until this day. The only two points on which there could be no dispute were that Alfred Brown, to his intense gratification and surprise, received and gratefully accepted the invitation intended for Arthur, and that the grocer went straight home to bed and slept the sleep of the innocent or of the unjustly persecuted.

III.

Not a vestige of suspicion had rested on the mind of either of the brothers Brown, as they discussed Roger's letter at the breakfast-table on Sunday morning, that the Yorkshireman's invitation had fallen into the wrong hands. Indeed, the ambiguous remark about "being rough on some of our bowlers" lent itself more readily to Alfred's rendering than to the translation intended by the original authors.

"I take it the stout party didn't like his silly lobs being hit to the boundary twice in one over," chuckled Alfred.

"Probably not," assented Arthur; and then, not having as yet entirely shaken off the old university superstition that colours have much to do with the making of a cricketer, he added, "And I suppose you'll be allowed to sport the All England colours."

"By Jove! yes, I hope so," responded the other eagerly. "Did you notice what they

were, by the way? I quite forgot to."

"Can't say I did exactly. Let me think." And after a momentary reflection Arthur added that, so far as his recollection went, different players had worn different caps, marking, he supposed, the various counties they belonged to.

"However, they'll tell you fast enough if you ask them," he concluded. "Mind you don't forget to ask."

And this piece of advice he repeated at the last moment, as he saw his brother off by the nine o'clock train on the eventful Monday morning.

The train was a few minutes late, and Alfred had barely time to change at his hotel and drive up to the ground before the Eleven, who had lost the toss, took their places in the field.

"Cod! I'm roight glod to see thee, yoong mon," exclaimed Roger, who was sufficiently recovered to play and even to

bowl after a fashion, and after shaking hands he went on—

"And noo where wilt thoo scoot, lod? I'm no gooin' to poot thee to bool till us cooms to a croox, loike."

For it had been already decided by a full committee that the Eleven should rely as far as possible on their own bowlers, and not call in the assistance of the new hand except in case of dire emergency.

"Anywhere in the country, please," replied Alfred cheerily; "I'm only a change bowler, you know."

"Vera toidy chaange, I coont," murmured Roger, and the conversation dropped.

As luck would have it, the locals made a poor show in their first innings, and when Alfred, going in tolerably high up, had made a small double figure, in addition to having safely held a good catch in the country, he had good cause to be satisfied with his *début* in first-class company when the rival teams sat down to lunch on the second day of the match. The Twenty-two had at that period lost three wickets for some dozen runs in their second innings, and after lunch a cautious and painfully slow-scoring stand by two of the paid men cut an hour or more to waste, not at all to the disconcertment of the Eleven, who had had a good margin of runs in hand. It was only at five o'clock in the afternoon that danger began to threaten, when a young Cantab, having knocked off one round-arm bowler, proceeded to help himself rather freely off Roger's

lobs, which, owing to the bowler's stiff knee, were by no means up to standard excellence.

"Noo, lod, tak' a toorn," at last exclaimed Roger, handing the ball to Alfred as he spoke. "Shall I please field for thee?"

"Oh, thanks awfully!" And far too much nervously excited to notice that the Yorkshireman had arranged to field for fast left-hand bowling, Alfred prepared for action.

There was always a good deal of deliberation, as well as a certain amount of originality, about Mr Alfred Brown's methods as a bowler—and, from the spectator's point of view, his action left little to be desired—in the way of comicality. Having carefully stepped out some twenty yards from the crease, and scratched the ground vigorously with his foot by way of marking a starting-point, the young gentleman turned abruptly, and after a momentary pause executed a wild leap into the air, and then, covering the distance to the bowler's wickets by a series of alternating high bounds and short rushes, delivered a very slow and stately long hop on the leg-side.

Assuredly no ball, good, bad, or indifferent, ever created a greater sensation.

For every man-jack of the densely packed ring of Flavell and neighbouring village cobblers sprang to his feet and roared forth tumultuous applause. Fred Anson, who was standing turn and turn about with the proper umpire, only

escaped utter destruction by throwing himself flat on the ground with his back towards the wicket, and the ball, struck with a hard-hitting batsman's full vigour, and passing over the exact spot where Fred's head should by rights have been, eventually pitched about ten yards short of the boundary, and on the first bound landing in the pit of a particularly fat and loudly vociferous cobbler's stomach, fairly knocked all the wind out of his body.

"B——y good marksman, too!" a remark made by one of the bystanders, was all the sympathy which the victim got, and, as manners went at Flavell, he should have thought himself lucky to get that, while even the worthy Roger's comment on the situation was not wholly void of offence.

The one person on the ground who kept his head, and seemed to take everything as a matter of course, was the bowler, who, as soon as the ball was returned, proceeded to give a second performance, in which the action and the pace were repeated as before, albeit there was a notable variety of pitch and direction, with the result that a full pitch on the off, badly "sliced" by the batsman, hummed past Roger's left ear, as he stood at point, with such velocity that the Yorkshireman was well advised in taking up a position ten yards farther away from the wicket. Then followed a full pitch to leg, much again to the disconcertment of the umpire, and the final ball of the over was a straight half-

volley. This the hard-hitting Cantab, who had already made twelve runs in the over, smiting with unabated vigour, apparently steered clear of the bowler's reach. But Alfred, with an acrobatic leap, and a left hand thrown wildly out, brought off a truly marvellous catch; and then, assuming the air of a man who is accustomed to accomplish this sort of feat once or twice in the course of each week, he rolled the ball quietly down the pitch, and, sitting down, affected to be examining the condition of a doubtful spike. The cobbler's ring, which had shown wild enthusiasm before, was now simply intoxicated with delight. They evidently regarded the whole performance as a sort of previously rehearsed scene in a pantomime got up for their amusement, and felt that there had been nothing seen to equal it on the Flavell ground since the Clowns' match four years before, when Joe Proctor, riding up to the wicket on a tinker's donkey, had been kicked off at precisely the right moment.

"Ancore! ancore!" resounded from all sides of the ground, and it really seemed as if the ring intended to emulate the example of the town-mob at Ephesus and shout for the space of two hours.

The awful din in no way commended itself to the captain of the All England Eleven.

"Yoong mon," he said solemnly, approaching Alfred, "doost thoo think thoo'rt at t' circoos?"

"Circoos? No. Why?" re-

plied Alfred, looking up from his shoe.

"What's thoo geot at, booling stoof loike thot, then?"

"But I always do bowl like that."

The assertion, made in all sincerity, fairly staggered the Yorkshireman.

"Thoo didnst bool tha' stoof o' Saturday," he objected, after a long pause.

"I never bowled at all on Saturday."

"Dom it, mon! thoo deidst, I tell 'ee."

"I tell you I didn't," hotly retorted Alfred, springing to his feet. "It was my brother who bowled on Saturday. I wasn't playing at all. I was playing against you in the first match, and I hit you for two fours in one over, by the same token, so there!"

Roger, thoroughly taken aback, could only scratch his head and stare; while Fred Anson, who had strolled up to listen to the conference, put his hand to his mouth and shouted out for the benefit of all who cared to hear—

"D——d if old Roger ain't been and gotten the wrong sow by the ear!" which remark, passing rapidly out of the ring, provoked fresh yells of delight.

"I say, lod!" at last Roger found breath to ask, "whoy didn't thoo say as theer wor a pair on 'ee, and as thoo wosn't thoy broother?"

"Because I'm not such an ass, of course," snapped Alfred. "Do you suppose I was going to travel thirty miles on purpose to say, 'Please, I'm not

my brother'? Besides, as it happens, you never said a word about my bowling in your silly letter, and, you see, I've got your wicket for you. What more did you expect?"

"Reckon as the young gemman is upsides down wi' you there, Roger!" exclaimed Fred Anson, who, privileged by accident to regard the situation from an impartial point of view, was equally tickled by Alfred's indignation and Roger's profound bewilderment, as the latter walked slowly off to his place at point, still scratching his head, and with wide-open eyes.

As things turned out, Alfred proved to have the better of the argument. For though, to the disappointment of the crowd, he was not invited to repeat his bowling performances, wickets fell apace after he had brought about the dissolution of the one really dangerous partnership, and when the match resulted in a seven wickets' victory for the Eleven early in the afternoon of the third day, Mr Brown, who, in addition to having made double figures in his only innings, had shown some really fine fielding in the country, and had brilliantly dismissed the best batsman on the opposing side, might have been fairly adjudged to have done yeoman service.

All ideas of resentment had long since faded from the worthy Roger's breast as he shook hands with Alfred at the finish and thanked him for his assistance.

"May I consider myself a

member now?" inquired the latter.

"In coorse thoo may," was the hearty answer, "if thoo payest ontrance ond soobscription."

"Thanks, awfully! How much?" And seeing that his pigeon was to hand, all anxious to be plucked, Roger then and there increased the five pounds which it had been his original intention to go for, to twelve.

"Ten poonds ontrance, and twa soobscription, loike," he explained; and then a minute later, when Alfred, in whose eyes membership of the All England was a distinction higher even than a peerage of the realm, had accepted the situation with avidity, the Yorkshireman might have felt inclined to say with Clive, "By God! at this moment I stand astonished at my own moderation!" For "Right you are!" responded Alfred cheerily; "I'll post you a cheque to-night. And now about colours? Where can I get them?"

"Coolours?" ejaculated the Yorkshireman, fairly dazed for the moment by excessive prosperity. "Where'st thoo get coolours?" he slowly repeated; and then there came to his rescue a happy thought, as he felt that he saw a way towards killing two birds with one stone. "Coom awa', lod, an' I'll show thoo. Coom awa' to Jock Nolby, as is secratoiry loike."

For it chanced the young Notts man, being of a somewhat frivolous turn of mind, had been in the habit of out-

raging the feelings of the more staid members of the Eleven by appearing in the field on sundry occasions in caps of startling variety and hue, bought at oost price from itinerant vendors; and it occurred to the Yorkshireman that he would be doing a good turn to other folk, as well as to Johnnie, if he succeeded in palming off at a fair profit the two latest atrocities which he had seen Johnnie purchase a few days back.

"Jock, lod," he exclaimed, pinching Johnnie's arm as he spoke, "hast thoo gotten thee cops in thee bog?" And when Johnnie, nothing loth, had produced the articles, Roger, albeit that for the moment he was a little taken aback by the discovery that the two caps, though equally hideous, were of two distinct patterns, once again rose to the occasion.

"There's cops for booling, and there's cops for botting," he explained; "reed wi' bloo poak for wan, and bloo wi' reed poak for t'other. And seein' as Mooster Broon does a bit of boath loike, he's entitled to ha' boath. Fit's foine," he added, adjusting one of the caps to Alfred's head, "an' sets off t' feace well. Foive shillings each, beant 'em, Jock?"

"Five-and-six," corrected Johnnie, who, having paid elevenpence for the pair, felt that he might as well convert the pence into as many shillings while he was about it.

And Alfred, prudently disguising his astonishment at

the extraordinary taste in colours shown by the great cricketers, shelled out the money on the spot and hurried off to catch his train.

"Tell 'ee what it is, Roger," observed Johnnie a few minutes later, when the completion of the double bargain had been duly wetted, "next time as me and you goes cricketing together, we'd best get up the side weerselves and have nine substitootes."

"Coom awa', lod, and haud thee toong," replied the other, who felt that his inventive faculty was far too much exhausted to bear any further strain at present.

There is no record to show whether Alfred Brown ever wore upon a public occasion

the colours thus dearly, or it may be thus cheaply, won, nor do I believe that he ever figured again in the ranks of the All England Eleven. He is long past work as an active cricketer now, but still keeps up his interest in the game, and, like other men of his standing, from time to time laments over the degeneracy of modern cricket. He can generally tell a good story over his bottle of port, dating from the year when "I was playing for the All England Eleven"; and he is highly esteemed by a family of grand-nephews, whose pride and joy it is to be able to inform their schoolmates that "the governor's uncle" was once the best cricketer in England.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE HABIT OF CENTENARIES — BULWER'S EARLY NOVELS — HIS FALSE PHILOSOPHY — 'THE CAXTONS' AND 'MY NOVEL' — HIS COLONIAL POLICY — RALPH WALDO EMERSON — HIS INDIVIDUALISM — A PROPHET WITH AN IMPERFECT SENSE OF ART AND HISTORY — THE MAKING OF MAXIMS.

OUR present age is an age of speed and short memories. We travel so fast along the road of life that we have no time to mark the milestones that we leave behind, or to seek upon the map the broad highway traversed by our forefathers. Moreover, while we are eagerly curious about distant lands, the country that lies nearest to us is most often undiscovered. In other words, the history of the ancients is more familiar to us than the history of those who precede us by a generation. To go back a hundred years is to return to the times which were before Nineveh, and thus it is that centenaries have their value. They remind us of those who, confident in their own day of immortal fame, have been asked by a grudging posterity to step down from the pedestal upon which their contemporaries placed them. Only the greatest can hope to recover, dead, the glory which living they enjoyed; yet the world's favour is too changeable for justice, and a birthday is as good excuse as can be found for recalling the dimmed images of the past.

It is just a hundred years ago, then, that Edward Bulwer (afterwards Lord Lytton) was born into a prosaic world. He was a true child of his age

—fantastic, sentimental, and fashionably morbid. From the first he believed himself endowed with special gifts, and marked out for a special destiny. It was never his fate to feel the joys or to understand the sorrows of childhood. At fifteen he was no longer a boy, but a little man. He could already address his mother in such terms as these: "Were I not aware of the importance of your Time,"—he is writing from a school at Rottingdean—"I would send you a small Ode I have composed in imitation of Milton's 'Allegro' upon a Poker. I will, however, no longer intrude upon Time so precious." Two years later, when he had determined to publish his first volume of verse, "My youth," he wrote, "like the shield of Ajax, will ward off those darts which, at a later age, can meet no considerable Resistance or Obstacle, in favour of early publication." It is small wonder, indeed, that he, who thus expressed himself to his mother, found it difficult to mix with his fellows. His pride would not permit him to run the risk of being birched at a public school, and at Cambridge, says he, "surrounded by so many hundred youths of my own years, I was alone." How could it be

otherwise? An exquisite, who, in his own immortal phrase, had "seen the world in boudoir and drawing-room," could hardly be expected to join in the boyish pursuits of undergraduates. The size and frivolity of Trinity appalled him, and he first found some small amount of happiness when he had migrated, as a fellow-commoner, to Trinity Hall. There, too, he encountered a companion, intellectual as himself, in Alexander Cockburn, who persuaded him to join the Union, and to cultivate the seeds of eloquence which nature had sown within him.

At the Union he speedily distinguished himself, and the verse wherein Praed describes his intervention in debate shows him, at twenty, what he remained unto the end. The question is reform, and Mr Bulwer rises to address the House:—

"Then the Church shakes her rattle,
and sends forth to battle
The terror of Papist and Sinner,
Who loves to be seen as the modern
Mæcenæ,
And asks all the poets to dinner."

Thus he was already not merely a poet, but a patron of poets, and it was as a poet that he preferred to regard himself, even when he had taken his place among the Commons, and was an eminent novelist. His ambition, moreover, was strengthened by the fact that in 1825 he won the Chancellor's medal for a copy of verses on "Sculpture," which was discussed outside the boundaries of Cambridge, and evoked a "slashing" article—the first of how many?—in 'Fraser's Maga-

zine.' His vocation, therefore, was clear, when he left the University; the laurel wreath was already about his brows; and he came to London, full-fledged, a statesman and a man of genius.

His education, narrow and self-conscious, had almost wholly eradicated from his nature the valuable quality of humour. He was what to-day we should call a prig; he was prepared to view his slightest action with a profound seriousness; and he posed before the world as a lettered exquisite, and the near rival to Benjamin Disraeli. He met with an immediate success, for he was able to give the people precisely what it wanted without effort, and he was precisely the sort of man which the people—in 1828—was inclined to worship. He was well-born, and he had already created about himself an atmosphere of indolent foppery; wherefore he made an instant appeal to a democracy which, already conscious of coming "Reform," still condescended to be amused by the gentry. And if the people understood him, he understood the people. He followed its shifting taste, as a doctor follows the changing temperature of a fever-patient. 'Pelham; or, The Adventures of a Gentleman,' was admirably designed to catch the breeze of popularity. Published a year after 'Vivian Grey'—*O tempus mirabile*, to produce two first books fresh and vivid as these!—it instantly established its author's reputation. It introduced the great middle-class to the two regions beyond its reach—the drawing-room and

the boosing-ken. . It was a fine blend of worldliness and Byronism, of high society and raffishness. Now it bristled with epigram; now it was stiff with pomposity. Sentimental and sparkling by turns, how could it miss success? How could its reception fail to assure the author that he was in very truth a man of genius?

The next years were years of triumph. Whatever Bulwer touched turned to gold. Nothing came amiss to him, —neither fiction nor drama, neither epic nor satire; and it is not surprising that he completely lost his head. He believed that he was not merely a great Artist,—he proclaimed himself a profound philosopher and a lofty moralist; and, even at the moment when he was the hero of every parlour in England, he was pleased to insist that he was misunderstood, that the press was in a conspiracy to ruin him. It was an arduous position to assume; yet he assumed it with the same ease wherewith he dashed off a romance or composed a comedy. Not content with preaching those vague doctrines of the True and the Beautiful, always dear to his heart, in the pages of his novels, he was eloquent in the criticism and explanation of himself. 'Pelham,' for him, was something more than the "adventures of a gentleman"; it was a brilliant and successful attempt to prove "that the lessons of society do not necessarily corrupt, and that we may be both men of the world, and even, to a certain degree, men of pleasure, and yet be something wiser —

nobler — better." Such a gospel was clearly irresistible, and if it was pernicious it chimed precisely with the tune of the time. But it reveals to us Bulwer's favourite weakness, and it helps to explain how so accomplished a workman did not for many years write a single line worthy remembrance.

The truth is, he was always attempting a task far beyond his powers. His conspicuous sense of drama, his power of constructing a story, seemed trivial enough to the elegant sentimentalist, in whose character he chose to masquerade. No book was worth a jot in his eyes which did not aim at achieving a purpose. 'Paul Clifford,' for instance, is a spirited story, though it may be objected that the virtuous highwayman is not the best hero of romance—that such personages are best treated in the ironic vein, as Fielding treated Jonathan Wild. But in Bulwer's hands 'Paul Clifford' became a kind of omnibus in which every morality that came along might have a ride. The humour of Tomlinson and his gang was forgotten in an unctuous philosophy which should find no place in romance. 'Paul Clifford,' we are told, was "an appeal from Humanity to Law"; it was "a foresign of a coming change." The author declared that "between the literature of imagination and the practical interests of a people there is a harmony as complete as it is mysterious." And not only did 'Paul Clifford,' in the author's opinion, "draw attention to a vicious Prison-discipline, and a sanguinary

Criminal Code," it marked in some intangible fashion a changed condition of the people. Now, apart from the fact that the work of reform, which Bulwer claimed to have accomplished, was indubitably done by Edward Gibbon Wakefield, is there not a monstrous lack of humour in the author's view of 'Paul Clifford'? Is there not a palpable folly in attempting to demonstrate that "the man who lives within the pale can be as bad as the man without"? That is a question which to Bulwer seemed "subtle"; to the most of men it seems not merely crude but mischievous.

However, it was a poor theme which did not suggest to Bulwer, in his unregenerate days, some reflections concerning the ideal. So "when the ignorant or malicious were decrying the moral of 'Paul Clifford,'" says Bulwer, "I consoled myself with perceiving that its truths had stricken deep—that many, whom formal essays might not reach, were enlisted by the picture and the popular force of Fiction into the service of that large and Catholic Humanity which frankly examines into the causes of crime." In a similar strain of appreciation he declares that Ernest Maltravers, the hero of another romance, "never wantonly rejected those great principles by which alone we can work the Science of Life—a desire for the Good, a passion for the Honest, a yearning after the True." Now, all this is either commonplace or bunkum. If it be philosophy, it is ill-digested; if it be morality, it is a glimpse into the

obvious; but it is eminently characteristic of Bulwer, and its irrelevant shallowness does much to explain the success of his earlier romances.

For of Bulwer's success there is as little doubt as of Bulwer's versatility, and we should not condemn too heavily the vanity of him who won all the suffrages. There was no kind of novel-writing that he did not practise with an easy triumph. In all branches he seemed to his contemporaries to hold the lead. Who was his equal in the novel of sentiment, the novel of crime, the novel of history, the novel of mysticism? He could reproduce the refined accent of the drawing-room, or he could patter the flash. A single phrase in 'Pelham' fixed the colour of evening-coats for all time. "You look best in black," said Lady Frances to her son, "which is a great compliment, for people must be very distinguished in appearance to do so;" and all men, in the vague hope of appearing "distinguished," laid aside their Joseph's coats for sombre black. It is not surprising, therefore, that Bulwer, dictating the fashion and dominating the taste of his day, should have overestimated his own talent. Moreover, he won victories in many other fields than in the field of fiction. His plays were the only plays of the time to hold the stage, which they have not yet relinquished. Yet no success can change the truth that the 'Lady of Lyons' is fustian, and that 'Money' is a mere mechanism. Again, he aspired, as we have seen, to the poet's crown; yet his 'King

Arthur' was long since dead, and excellent passages though 'St Stephen's' contains, it is not sufficient basis for a reputation. However, by popular consent, Bulwer could do nothing wrong. He had but to murmur the True and the Beautiful in melting accents, and the world lay prostrate at his feet. Not even adverse criticism availed to turn the tide of public favour, and in spite of Maginn, Thackeray, and the rest, Bulwer was loudly applauded for the worst that was in him.

The support of the people was no doubt the best solace possible, but Bulwer was sensitive to criticism, and he resented with a proper bitterness the insults of 'Fraser's,' the 'Athenæum,' and the 'Quarterly.' And though he was perfectly justified in defending his own position, his general condemnation of all criticism lost much of its force by his own bitterness in denouncing others. In truth, the author of 'The New Timon' had little right to be sensitive. He, too, had taken arms in the fierce battle of the wits which was waged half a century ago. He had given as well as received hard knocks. He had ridiculed "school-miss Alfred," "out-babying Wordsworth and outglittering Keats"; he had reproached Peel with plumping the puling Muse, with pensioning Tennyson, "while starves a Knowles"; and he had been fiercely trounced for his pains. "I thought we knew him," replied the Laureate. "What! it's you,—the padded

man that wears the stays?" Truly "the captain" put "the subaltern" in his proper place, but it was the subaltern who gave the provocation, and Timon, old or new, was not the man to resent the acrimony of another's pen.

Had Bulwer died in 1845, he would have left behind nothing but a reputation of curiosity. He would have been remembered as a novelist who hit the popular taste, and enraged the critics. We might have been wondering to-day why he and his age took the sentimental cloy-faker as a fair example of the Beautiful and the True. But we should certainly not have found a place for him among writers of English. He had done many things, and he had done nothing well. For all his tincture of letters, he wrote the English language without intelligence or distinction. For all his interest in his plots, he constructed his stories with a clumsy haste; and the simple philosophy, into which he so often digresses, merely lightened the labour of composition. He was, in fact, not an artist, but an executant. He played the fiddle of his time well enough to attract a large audience, but the public called the tune, and when it was called it was hardly worth the playing. And then—in 'The Caxtons'—he produced a work which deceived all the prophets. The first hint of the coming masterpiece was whispered to John Blackwood, to whom he declared in 1843 that "he had hit upon the most popular subject he had yet tried." He

wished to preserve the strictest incognito, he said, as he aimed at winning a new reputation with the new book. However, it was a work that could not be achieved in a day, and five years passed before Lytton submitted the manuscript to the judgment of the publisher. And then, as though conscious he had written something worthy his talent, he assumed the most modest demeanour. He was ready to satisfy the prejudices of 'Blackwood's Magazine,' to accept in a spirit of cheerfulness the criticism of the editor; and the pleasant correspondence which passed between author and publisher shows Lytton in a new and amiable light. The publisher was enthusiastic, and his enthusiasm was echoed by a public to which hitherto Lytton had made no appeal. Its true authorship was unsuspected; and it is not astonishing that by some it was ascribed to no less a scholar than Robert Southey. For Lytton it was indeed a new departure. Here was no talk of Art and the Ideal, such as had entranced the illiterate readers of Great Britain. Here were no murderers, whose tear-bedimmed cheeks plainly advertised the purity of their motives. No: in 'The Caxtons' Lytton made a frank return to the best tradition of English literature. If he got his inspiration from 'Tristram Shandy,' he invented a Shandism perfectly consonant with his own age and his own taste. Uncle Roland owed something to my Uncle Toby—that is evident. But he was also, in his author's own words, "a

Tory of the high old chivalric school." Indeed, there was nothing in the book "to alarm Blackwoodian susceptibilities," and as we read it we can only regret that Bulwer fumbled so long at the monstrous impossibilities of his earlier romances, and had not at the first found his true vein.

For 'The Caxtons' is distinguished by the old-fashioned scholarly humour which belonged to the English literature of the eighteenth century. Lytton had been an assiduous reader all his life, and, moreover, he had filled a whole library of common place-books with extracts, which accounts for the pleasantly bookish air of 'The Caxtons.' The humour, too, belongs to literature as intimately as to life, and though the book owes much to Lytton's own experience—"my father," for instance, is a portrait of his grandfather—that experience has been sifted into the book through the fine meshes of 'Tristram Shandy.' The origin of the characters is as obvious as the origin of the humour, but Lytton is not guilty of plagiarism. So broad an adaptation is free to any one who has the skill to make it, and Pisistratus Caxton, his father, and Uncle Roland are no less original because they sometimes walk in the august footsteps of Tristram, Mr Shandy, and Uncle Toby. The plot, moreover, is sternly subordinated to the characters and their humour, and if the episode of Vivian is melodramatic, after the author's wont, it is but an episode, and does not affect the essence of the book.

Nor, having taken a step forward, did Lytton go back. The novels which followed 'The Caxtons' possess the same observation and humour as that work. They are redolent of the open air; they present the peaceful life of the English countryside, as the Hertfordshire squire had studied it on the spot. Parson Dale and the Squire, Jasper and Waife, are more true, and therefore, in Lytton's own jargon, more beautiful, than the whole mob of Cliffords and Beauforts and Pelhams and Granvilles, on whom he had so highly prided himself. And the environment in which he put his newest characters was far more romantic than the dark alleys and smashers' dens, than the soaring palaces and fountained glades, of his earlier productions. Nor was he himself insensible of his new-found merits. He set up for himself the loftiest models, and had no doubt but that he would rise to their excellence. It is in these terms that he sketches the intention of 'My Novel' to John Blackwood: "Conceive for a model what Voltaire would have been had he relinquished some of his cold wit for Goldsmith's genial humour, and had he, instead of seeking to change society, sought to cement it. Such was my fanciful model when I sat down. Voltaire, however, begins to vanish, and the influence of Goldsmith to be more predominant."

Of course the result was neither Goldsmith nor Voltaire, but, when all deductions are made, Lytton presents the un-

accustomed and happy spectacle of a writer who achieved his best work at the end of his career. And the achievement is the more remarkable in his case, because he started life as a jaded miracle of precocity. He had published the verses which he wrote at fourteen, and he was in the thick of the *mêlée* at an age at which most men are merely sharpening their pens. Yet he was fresh enough after twenty years of incessant toil to evolve a new style, and to paint a new world. It is this quality of regeneration which seems to us far more brilliant than his over-praised versatility. To do many things badly is not the high accomplishing of a successful career. As he says himself, in 'The Caxtons,' "In the mind, as in yonder chimney, to make the fire burn hot and quick, you must narrow the draught." And this is what he forgot to do in the old fearless days when he was "throwing off" his popular romances,—he forgot to "narrow the draught"; and the little heat that there was in his mind was so widely diffused that it lost all power to warm either heart or head.

Meanwhile, Lytton was playing his part in the government of his country. Before the passing of the Reform Bill he had already found his way into Parliament as an eager Radical. Then for eleven years he renounced politics, until in 1852 he returned to the House of Commons. He says of himself that he was not an orator; his powers of speaking he declared to be "very uncertain, and very imperfectly

developed." In a passage of curious insight into the true character of the politician, he points out his own unfitness for public life. "The acting man," he says, "should never be conscious of the absurdity and error which are more or less inseparable from every path of action. I am too impatient of subordination, an immense fault in the acting man. In all situations of command I can act best when I have to defend others, not serve myself." But while in these words he defined the statesman's character, he did himself less than justice. He was an orator of considerable force and talent, nor are his speeches delivered in Parliament worthy the oblivion which commonly overtakes the effects of eloquence. But more than this, on the single occasion in which he held office he showed himself a statesman of grasp and energy. Few men have done more for our Colonies than did Lytton during the brief time that he presided over the Colonial Office. Under his auspices British Columbia became a colony, and the monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company was removed. And the speeches which he delivered upon these questions show a grasp of imperial policy, an understanding of colonial necessities, which it is surprising to detect in the affected author whom Thackeray wittily and not unjustly burlesqued in "George de Barnwell."

It is not easy to recall contemporary opinion of the dead, but it is certain that Lytton, the politician, won a high and general esteem. In 1855, when

the Conservative party, still distrustful of Disraeli, whom with perfect misunderstanding it regarded as a man of shifts, was looking about for a leader, Lytton was singled out for the post by more than one. Elwin, the editor of 'The Quarterly,' was half-disposed to place the politics of his review in the hands of the novelist, and John Murray would gladly have acquiesced in this delegation of authority. And even when Elwin had made up his mind to keep the power in his own grasp, he was yet prepared to propose and to support Lytton for the leadership of the party. Elwin, of course, was not the soundest politician in the world; yet he did not defy public opinion, and the fact that he designed the author of 'Pelham' for high office is sufficient proof that the novelist's reputation was more gravely considered yesterday than to-day.

After all, reputations are often made or marred by accident, and Lytton, though he chime not with the present temper, may presently regain the popularity that was so precious to him. But what of Emerson, who, born on the same day with Lytton, lived through the same years, and influenced a contemporaneous public? The habit of centenaries gives us the chance of drawing a sharp contrast. Lytton never ceased to chant the praises of the True and the Beautiful; but for all his professions of idealism, he was a man of action. He took his share in the government of his country, and he played his part

among the great men of his time. Emerson, on the other hand, also an idealist, also an amateur of the Beautiful and the True, was never tired of proclaiming the superiority of life to literature, yet his most desperate experiment in life was a visit to Stonehenge with Thomas Carlyle; and he spent the many years allotted to him in study and reflection. We do not know what Lytton thought of Emerson, if, indeed, he ever thought of him at all. We do know Emerson's opinion of Lytton, and it cannot be called flattering. "Bulwer," said he, "an industrious writer, with occasional ability, is distinguished for his reverence of intellect as a temporality, and appeals to the worldly ambition of the student. His romances tend to feed these low flames." The comment is amusing and characteristic—a frank confession of the arch-pedantry which was the master quality of Emerson's mind. Now, Emerson, though he had once delivered sermons from Cotton Mather's own pulpit, had been driven forth from his cure of souls on account of his opinions. But he never ceased to preach; he did but exchange a pulpit for a platform; and he expounded his own peculiar views with a persistence and ingenuity which won him for the moment many adherents. His whole career, in fact, was a glorified penny-reading. He aimed at nothing less than universal knowledge. He professed to his hearers an acquaintance with the history and literature of all ages and all climes, and doubtless he flattered them by

assuming that they knew as much as himself. The lists of great names with which his pages are liberally sown display a lack of fitness, deplorable even in a transcendental philosopher. "Pindar, Raphael, Angelo, Dryden, and De Staël" is his finest performance in this line, and it is safe to conjecture that none of the names had any meaning for him. But he was of those who could speak of Zoroaster as though the name meant something; and this coxcombry betokened the *parvenu* in literature—the citizen of a country which was just beginning to find out what erudition meant.

Though Emerson professed before all things to be a teacher, to deliver a universal message, his mind and method are so cruelly disjointed as to elude the closest scrutiny. It mattered not a jot what title he gave to this or that lecture. In his hands every subject was an inefficient vehicle for maxims, which are sometimes true, and often contradictory one to another. But there was one gospel which he preached wherever the chance of speech came to him—the gospel of individualism. At the outset he did but sing the praises of independence. "Is it not the chief disgrace not to be an unit; not to be reckoned one character?" We should all agree in answering "Yes" to this question. But Emerson did not stay his doctrine at this point of moderation. He made his individualism an excuse for attacking society, tradition, history—all the forces, in fact,

which make up our world. Though he was but a fly assaulting a fortress, the helplessness of the attack did not lessen its ferocity. His anarchy both in life and letters is plain for all to see, and it may best be qualified by Matthew Arnold's excellent epithet—provincial. Emerson, in truth, was apt to think that Concord was the universe, and that law and the past had no firmer grasp upon old cities than upon that youthful and respectable parish.

Once upon a time he "opened" to Carlyle "the dogma of no government and non-resistance," and we cannot but wonder at his temerity. But it was a dogma very near to his heart, and not even the fear of the Sage availed to silence it. And as in politics, so in philosophy and literature he would have every man an anarchist—coming from nowhere and going nowhither. Thus easily he forgot his Pindar and his De Staël. "Insist on yourself; never imitate," says he, and he did not realise the absurdity of the maxim. Nothing has ever been created without imitation. As the elder Dumas said, "When God made man, He made him in His own image." Nine-tenths of every art are tradition; and even Emerson himself, despite his anarchical protests, was the child of the past. He wrote a prose which was not invented at Concord, but which had been fashioned through centuries of effort by the masters of English literature. He dealt in the common

counters of philosophy, stamped by the impress of Plato and Bacon; and if he dealt in them unsuccessfully, his ill-success did not make them his own. But it pleased him to think that every man was born into the world a naked savage, knowing nothing, inheriting no tastes and no tendencies. And while he held that none should be a borrower, he deprecated with equal severity the sin of lending. As a writer should permit no influence, so he should exert none. A man, he thought, must put off all foreign support. "He is weaker by every recruit to his banner. Is not a man better than a town?" Why, then, we may ask, did Emerson deliver his lectures? Was he not betraying his own sacred cause by every word he uttered?

From this it follows that his brightest hope was to see the soul of this world "clean from all vestige of tradition," and he does not tell us how a world can be "clean" from that whence it sprung, and which remains the best part of it. But, like the true anarchist that he was, he does not perceive the true grandeur of self-comprehension, the noble sense that we are links in a chain, or, to change the image, that we are handing on to the next generation the lamp (well-trimmed, let us hope) that we received from the last. Nor is this the end of his individualism. He champions the "cleanliness" of his own soul with so fierce an egoism that he cannot allow with patience that the ancient masters should keep

their names. "The name and circumstance of Pheidias," says he, "however convenient for history, embarrass when we come to the highest criticism." We should hesitate to explain this pronouncement. We are only confident that it is in direct opposition to Emerson's own argument, unless we may assume an individualism so lofty that it suppresses the individual, who himself becomes a mere abstract quality.

Being an apostle of individualism, Emerson was naturally an apostle of nature. Rousseau was his master, and had he been logical he would have cast trousers aside, and gone on all-fours. But he was not logical, and so he contented himself with misinterpreting the theory and practice of the arts. Obsessed by a maxim of his own making, he was ready to blunder with all the authority of a prophet. His criticisms of literature persuade you to believe that he had never read—that, true to his own gospel, he had kept his mind unspotted from the past. But whether he had read them or not, he judges the masterpieces of literature with a pleasant assurance. Milton he finds "too literary," Homer "too literal and historical." He involves in a general charge of "materialism" and "hard exactitude" Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare. Pope's poetry he pronounces "fit to put round a frosted cake," and Walter Scott wrote "without stint, a rhymed traveller's guide to Scotland." And then he declares, out of the depth of his ignorance, that the Greek artists

"heeded their designs and less considered their finish," until you are convinced that the individualists of Concord thought it not inconsistent with the higher life to parade a knowledge which they did not possess.

The other arts fare no better at his hands than literature. "I cannot hide from myself," says he in an immortal passage, "that there is an appearance of paltriness, as of toys, in sculpture." This is an amazing statement from the critic who was embarrassed by "the name and circumstance of Pheidias." But it demonstrates not only that Emerson was blind alike to colour and form, but that he never hesitated to dogmatise concerning that which he did not understand. No doubt a great man is a noble spectacle, but he is not "a new statue in every attitude and action," unless, indeed, he be gifted with a rare and conscious elegance. Greatness and beauty are identical only by accident, and in demanding that moral sentiment should perform the work of the eye, Emerson proves himself incapable of interpreting the arts.

His dogmatic temperament, however, forbade any man to enjoy what he himself could not appreciate. Because he himself was insensitive to æsthetic impressions, he declared that "all works of art should not be detached, but extempore performances." "The sweetest music," said he with his customary irrelevance, "is not in the oratorio, but in the human voice when it speaks tones of tenderness, truth, or courage."

In other words, when Washington murmured, "Father, I cannot tell a lie," he was singing more sweetly than Malibran. This jargon, of course, is a mere negation of art, and if it contained a grain of truth, the æsthetic instincts of man might easily be satisfied by a piece of chalk and a penny whistle.

With a similar certainty he discusses the origins of architecture, as though that art, too, had revealed its inmost mysteries to him. "I have seen a snow-drift along the sides of a stone wall, which obviously gave the idea of the common architectural scroll to abut a tower." You will see that Emerson at least is troubled by no doubts. To nature, which is foremost in his regard, he attributes all the processes of art, and plainly tells you that the work of man is due not to any purpose or selection but to accident. So, too, he is quite sure that he has uncovered the secret of the Gothic style. "The Gothic style," says he, "*plainly* originated in a rude adaptation of the forest trees with all their boughs to a festal or solemn arcade." "Plainly" is excellent, and it is characteristic of Emerson that he would impose his phantasy upon all the world as a solemn, irrefutable fact. In truth, he gives you the impression of a man who wakes up in a world which nobody else has ever seen, and for the phenomena of which the simplest explanation suffices.

He wrote much of history. Yet the historic sense within him was rudimentary as the

artistic. For one thing only we thank him: he championed the subjectivity of history. "There is properly no history," he said, "only biography"; and though in this pronouncement he goes too far, it is a pleasant counterblast to the modern professors, who see in history nothing better than a branch of social science. But Emerson could never look towards the past without one eye cast upon Concord, and he explains the universal interest which Greek history evokes by declaring that "every man passes through a Grecian period," that "all history is to be explained from individual experience." This theory was doubtless comforting to the vanity of a philosopher who believed that to go to Europe was "mendicancy," who would defy his dearest friends, saying, "Who are you? Unhand me: I will be dependent no more." But, comforting as it was, it was none the less nonsense, especially since it was illustrated by "facts" which have no link with truth. The Grecian period, for instance, in Emerson's eyes is single and uniform. The time of Homer is the same as the time of Xenophon, a period of plain and fierce manners, in which "luxury and elegance are not known." Thus does the philosopher of Concord stride across the centuries, accounting them as nothing, and deeming the golden civilisation of Athens no different from that of Homer's heroic age. But the argument merely demonstrates the prophet's lack of the historic sense, and justifies his own boastful question,

"What have I to do with the sacredness of tradition, if I live wholly from within?"

Indeed, he had nothing to do with tradition, and he lived so narrowly from within that he understood the spectacle of life as little as he understood the march of history. For him the world outside had no existence. The splendours of the past were a paltry experience, which the inhabitants of a far-off American village might share. When he travelled, in defiance of his cherished principles, he saw nothing more than he might have seen at home. It was, therefore, fortunate for him that he could look within. And what did he find there? A symbolism which warred with the simplicity of his soul—"I find," said he, "that fascination resides in the symbol,"—and an endless store of useful maxims. Here, indeed, lay his best talent. He could not sustain an argument: with all his ambitions he could not make a system. But he was an excellent hand at a maxim. Indeed, he tumbled aphorisms out upon his pages with prodigal fertility. They are not all true, and they follow so closely one upon another that they make his works a trifle tiresome to read. But some of them have passed into our common speech. There are few which would not appear admirable in a birthday book. "Hitch your waggon to a star." Do not these words contain the whole gospel of progressive America? Here is

another, which has already done excellent service in controversy: "To be great is to be misunderstood." "He that writes to himself writes to an eternal public." "Every man alone is sincere. At the entrance of a second person hypocrisy begins." "Heroism feels, and never reasons, and therefore is always right." Each of these aphorisms contains a well-stated truth, and they illustrate with perfect clarity Emerson's peculiar talent. He outraged on every page the consistency which he held in light esteem; he quoted with an easy freedom countless authors whom he imperfectly understood. With a light baggage of Platonism, he fancied himself a mystic; and, having scoffed for twenty years at human greatness, he is best known by a course of lectures upon great men. But, for all his contradictions, he knew better than most how to disengage the commonplace, and though his "superiority" is too often the superiority of the Mechanics' Institute, some of his proverbs are pertinent enough to outlast his name.

Thus on the same day there came into the world two apostles of the True and the Beautiful, which sounding abstractions they interpreted each after his own manner. They began the race of life together; they passed and repassed one another many times as they shook off the years. Will either of them, we wonder, reach the winning-post of immortality?

THE GOVERNMENT AND PARTIES.

THE SCOTTISH LICENSING BILL—THE LIGHTHOUSE BILL—THE LONDON EDUCATION BILL—THE CHURCH DISCIPLINE BILL—ORIGIN AND MEANING OF CAVES—THE STATE OF PARTIES—ALTERNATIVE GOVERNMENTS—MR MORLEY—DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF "RECONSTRUCTION."

WE are now in the third year of the existing Parliament, and supposing it to die a natural death, it has four more to live. It has now reached a period at which the House of Commons is not usually seen to the greatest advantage. The buoyancy, freshness, and good-humour of a newly elected majority have passed away. The time of renewed activity inspired by the prospect of an approaching dissolution has not yet arrived. Hence, perhaps, the common saying that in its third or fourth session a Ministry is on its trial. But to judge from what has passed in Parliament down to the commencement of the Easter holidays, Ministers will have no reason to fear the verdict of the public when their labours are concluded. They have during the present session shown no signs of lassitude, hesitation, or weakness on any subject. If we do not agree with all their proposals, we cannot accuse them of want of energy or promptitude. Important Bills have been read a second time. Others have been introduced and their provisions fully explained: and on two questions of great, though unequal, moment the Government has declared its views, if not to the sat-

isfaction of all men, with unmistakable clearness and decision.

So far we are speaking only of the industry and activity of the Government, and the importance of the work done. We are not pledging ourselves to recognise the wisdom of all their measures: on the contrary, with regard to two of the great questions of the day, which we have treated separately—namely, the Army Bill and the Irish Land Bill—it will be seen that on the first we differ from the Government scheme; while on the second, though we agree with the Bill in the main, we hope that further steps may be taken to provide against difficulties which may possibly arise in connection with it. Neither can we honestly congratulate Ministers on the attitude adopted by Mr Ritchie towards the Lighthouse question. The Light dues levied on the shipping interest cannot be regarded as ordinary insurances. The safety of our mercantile marine is a national concern, not only because of the commercial interests involved in it, but likewise as a nursery for sailors, with which even a steam navy cannot entirely dispense.

Measures which we can honestly applaud without any res-

ervations are the London Education Bill, the Port of London Bill, and the Scottish Licensing Bill. To take the last first, it is not denied on either side of the House that the Bill is a substantial advance in the right direction. And of course what is true of most urgent public needs is equally true of this, that if we wait till something can be done which shall satisfy everybody, we shall never do anything at all. The prevalence of drunkenness in Scotland is allowed by Scotsmen themselves to be more conspicuous than it is even in England; and the misery caused by it to be, if possible, more widespread. We are happy to see, therefore, that there is a disposition in the House of Commons to accept the present Bill as a salutary preventive, without raising the burning questions connected with the subject in general, or falling back on first principles, on which no two parties are agreed. The Temperance party, it appears, are willing to co-operate with the Government in passing the measure through Parliament, with only such amendments as shall improve its existing machinery, consistently with its original intention.

In the debate on the second reading a good deal was said about local option, and the inadequacy of the popular control over the liquor traffic which the Government proposed. But it is sometimes forgotten that the liquor traffic is not criminal, and that in dealing with it we have more than one interest to consider. The application of popular control to social habits is

a principle to be watched very narrowly, as it may easily develop into the grossest tyranny. We need only refer to the old Puritan *régime* in New England in proof of this assertion. Local option, therefore, in the discussion of the Government measure is ruled out. But there remain differences of opinion concerning the constitution of the licensing authority and the court of appeal. Of the members composing the former body two-thirds will in the counties be justices of the peace and one-third county councillors. The appeal court in the counties will be constituted on the same principle. Burghs with a population under 7000 will be merged in the counties. In those with a larger population the licensing authority will be the burgh magistrates; and the appeal court will be formed of one-third of such magistrates and two-thirds justices of the peace. The preponderance thus given throughout to the non-elective element was the principal topic of debate on the second reading of the Bill, which took place on the 6th of April. On this point Government will no doubt endeavour to meet the wishes of the Scottish members as far as may be without endangering the conditions on which all such legislation must be based—security, that is, for the rights of minorities, and respect for the property of individuals.

Some speakers complained that nothing was said in the Bill about compensation; and if nothing is to be said about

it, here we have an excellent reason for the majority of justices of the peace in the licensing authorities and appeal courts. It is true that in England some justices of the peace have shown themselves somewhat too regardless of vested interests. But on the whole, unless compensation is recognised, we would rather see these interests in the hands of the justices than handed over to the tender mercies of a so-called "popular" authority, swayed by every momentary impulse, and without the training and breeding which fit men to cope with clamour. It is questionable, however, whether by the omission of compensation the Bill does not rather tend to defeat its own object. The following remarks of Sir J. Stirling-Maxwell are very much to the point: "Whilst, however, there was no system under which any kind of compensation could be awarded, licensing authorities must feel that they had not really got a free hand in this matter, and whatever their powers might be under the law, they would never make a full use of them under those circumstances."

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman designated compensation as a Serbonian bog, a phrase which we trust the publicans will remember. But the question will have to be faced in England, if not in Scotland. The speeches of Lord Halsbury and Mr Balfour have already done much to allay the indignation in the Trade, very naturally excited by the policy of con-

fiscation which certain magisterial pedants considered themselves at liberty to adopt. We hope something will be said ere long to reassure the publicans of Scotland. Here are a class of men conducting a perfectly legitimate business, paying heavy taxes to the State, and just as much entitled to its protection as any other class of traders. It should never be in the power of any little clique or group to set at naught, of their own accord, a system which has flourished for centuries under theegis of the law; and which, sanctioned by the common-sense of the community, has attracted to itself large amounts of private capital, in full reliance on the prescriptive guarantees which civilised society affords.

The clause in the Bill relating to grocers' vans was generally applauded. As the law now stands they are nothing less than public-houses on wheels. Henceforth they will be allowed only to carry alcohol in obedience to a given order for it, instead of hawking it about for retail at every cottage door. The intention of this clause is excellent. We see some difficulty, however, in the enforcement of it. At all events, to make it generally effective will require police supervision of a somewhat stringent character.

The London Education Bill, as it proceeds on substantially the same lines as the Bill of last year, of course gives the same offence to the devotees of the old system, and to all, in fact, who call themselves

Progressives. They contend that there ought to be a new educational authority created *ad hoc*, as it is called, and elected directly by the rate-payers—in other words, a revived school board under another name. This is what Dr Macnamara's amendment and the National Union of Teachers are really aiming at, with the extinction of voluntary schools as their ultimate object in the background. But this is exactly what the Bill is intended to prevent. Dr Macnamara let the cat out of the bag at Bournemouth. Progressives resent the abolition of the old system as a practical rebuke to all the vagaries, extravagances, and costly and pretentious vanities which made it both odious and ridiculous. If they had their way these would all come back again; and it is devoutly to be hoped that Government will stand firmly by their present scheme.

The new education authority for London will be the County Council, working through a committee of ninety-two members, on which all the councils of the new metropolitan boroughs will be duly represented. Of these ninety-two, thirty-six shall be persons who are members of the local education authority, appointed by that authority—that is, members of the county council, chosen by itself; thirty-one shall be persons who are members of the councils of metropolitan boroughs, appointed by those councils, the Common Council and the council of the City of Westminster each appointing two

members, and each of the other metropolitan boroughs appointing one member; and twenty-five shall be appointed by the local education authority, in accordance with a scheme made by that authority, and approved by the Board of Education.

Objections may be taken to the proportion in which these several contingents are allotted, and arguments may be found against admitting the borough councils at all. It is of course the interest of the National Union of Teachers to shake off an authority which may possibly be a bar to their ambition. That goes without saying. But until we hear something against this feature of the Bill more cogent than anything we have heard yet we shall continue to regard it with considerable satisfaction. Members of the metropolitan borough councils are at least as well qualified for the task as members of provincial county councils, and, whether we regard their business capacities or their knowledge of educational requirements, quite as well fitted to discharge the duties now assigned to them as their brethren of Devonshire or Yorkshire. To the borough councils there will pertain the management of all public elementary schools within the borough, including the power of appointing and dismissing teachers, and the custody of the buildings. They are also to select the sites for any such additional schools as may be sanctioned by the superior authority. All their functions, indeed, are to be exercised subject to the control

of the central committee; and one objection to the scheme—namely, the probability of friction between the two—is answered by another. It is a mistake, we are told, to make every borough council an “autonomous unit.” If the borough council is autonomous, how can there be any fear of friction with the county council? If this fear is well founded, how can the borough council be autonomous? It seems to us that the latter is likely to be much better acquainted with local needs and more careful of the ratepayers’ money than the central committee, and anything tending to the reduction of taxation at the present moment should be warmly welcomed; but unless the boroughs obtain some direct influence over the spending bodies, there will be no attempt at economy, but in all human probability a still heavier burden on the public.

More than that, the borough councils are much less likely to be at the mercy of those faddists and fanatics who in the pursuit of their respective hobbies regard neither justice nor economy. The public will scarcely have forgotten the outlay incurred by the London School Board for the purchase of unnecessary sites, merely to prevent the voluntary schools from getting hold of them. The subordinate authorities will, it seems to us, be a wholesome check on such tendencies, should any such develop themselves. We should be sorry to find out that we had only exchanged one ogre for another.

Londoners do not want another educational despotism, nor to see their money swallowed up in teaching the working man’s children what can never do them any good and may do them much harm.

The policy of Ministers is one thing; their conduct and capacity another. No party can be expected long to continue faithful to a Government which shows itself deficient in either of the two last. But it may long continue to support one with which it does not invariably agree, if it shows itself possessed of both. And no impartial man, whether in the House or out of it, can deny that both have been shown by Mr Balfour. We may disagree with his Army Bill, with his attitude towards the Irish University question, with the refusal of the Government to listen to the appeal of the shipping interest. But throughout, whether right or wrong, he has betrayed no sign of indecision or timidity. Having a statesman at the helm, who with high intellectual ability combines great practical common-sense, we should give him all the support in our power, conscious of the advantage we possess in a leader of such marked superiority, and the moral strength which the whole party derives from the presence of such a man at their head.

His replies to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman on the 6th of April and to Mr Lloyd George on the 8th are well worth reading. Sir R. Reid proposed that the Grand Committee to which the licensing Bill was referred should in-

clude the whole body of Scottish members. Once establish such a precedent, said Mr Balfour, and where would you stop? How could we resist the demand that Committees on English Bills should be considered only by English members. He didn't deny that the exclusion of Scottish members might be sometimes advantageous, but the principle was decidedly wrong. In the time of any great national excitement, when the relations between England and Scotland happened to be rather strained, a situation which had occurred before and might occur again, such a system might be highly inconvenient, if not dangerous. The leader of the Opposition thought Scottish members were better able to judge of such questions than men from the Strand and Piccadilly. He said he meant members, not necessarily of Scottish birth, but representing Scottish constituencies. On that principle, said Mr Balfour, I should be disqualified for dealing with Scottish questions because I represent an English constituency, and the right hon. baronet for dealing with English questions because he sits for a Scottish constituency. Sir Henry was too modest. Nobody would say that he was disqualified except himself, an admission into which he was driven by the exigencies of his own argument. But, in truth, Sir Henry's demand points to much wider consequences than may be apparent on the surface of it. We really do not see why, if Scottish members

are to be supreme in a Committee on Scottish business, they should not also be supreme in all legislation that relates to Scotland. It would only be a little further extension of the same principle. At all events, it is certain that if the motion had been carried, it would shortly have been followed by similar demands from both Welsh and Irish members. In fact the germ of Home Rule lurks in Sir R. Reid's amendment, and Mr Balfour put his foot down upon it with praiseworthy promptitude.

On Wednesday, the day of the adjournment, Mr Lloyd-George attacked Mr Balfour with great vehemence for his reply to a deputation of licensed victuallers, in which he regretted the conduct of the magistrates in refusing the renewal of licences without any misconduct being proved against the holder—attributing the Prime Minister's speech to electioneering motives. It does not much matter what the member for Carnarvon says. But we were sorry to see that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman thought it consistent with his duty as leader of the Opposition to repeat the charge—in language, moreover, which we are sure he must have deeply regretted when the excitement of the moment was over. In his present unhappy situation, however, Sir Henry must be thankful for small opportunities, and it has been evident on one or two occasions lately that he has only been speaking as Sir Roger de Coverley spoke at

the assizes. "The speech he made," says Addison, "was so little to the purpose that I shall not trouble my readers with an account of it, and I believe was not so much designed by the knight himself to inform the court, as to give him a figure in my eye, and to keep up his credit in the country." That Mr Balfour might wish to put himself right with the constituencies who had been treated to very garbled versions of the Government policy on this question is likely enough; and he was well within his rights in doing so. But the real answer to the charges brought against him is to be found at the end of his speech on this occasion. In a few clear and forcible sentences, he at once put the compensation question on its proper footing. It was required, he said, in the interests of public morality. It would be a great national evil if the liquor traffic fell into the hands of a lower grade of men, who, uncertain of their position, would only seek to make hay while the sun shone. It is all-important to keep the trade in the hands of men of substance and respectability, and this could never be done if the business was placed on such a precarious footing as Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and his temperance allies require. Here spoke the real statesman—superior alike to both cant and calumny.

Mr Balfour's courage and liberality were equally conspicuous in his speech on the Church Discipline Bill on the

19th March. There is no doubt a section of English clergymen in the Church—not perhaps so numerous as some alarmists apprehend, but sufficiently large to justify considerable anxiety—whose object it is to restore the Church of England as she was before the Reformation, barring only the papal supremacy. That this object can be pursued without flagrant violation of the Church's law, as represented in the Book of Common Prayer, they scarcely pretend themselves; and in as far as Mr Austin Taylor's Church Discipline Bill is directed to the extirpation of this group of traitors, it has our entire sympathy. We may doubt, perhaps, whether the way which he has chosen is the best way; but if the means which he proposes are not what we ourselves should have adopted, the end which he has in view meets with our entire approval. In regard to the whole question of ecclesiastical legislation, we have, however, a second point to consider, and that is the preservation of the Established Church as a part of the English constitution. One test to which, in our opinion, all such measures must be subjected, is the degree in which they are calculated to secure this object. And this is one which we fear the Bill in question fails to satisfy. So far from fulfilling the two great purposes which Conservative legislators must always keep before their eyes—namely, the repulsion of Romanism and the security of the Establishment—we greatly doubt whether it

would not have exactly the opposite effect — strengthen the hands of Romanism and bring the Establishment to the ground.

We desire in this article to approach the question from a purely political and social point of view, and shall say no more than we have already said as to the utter incompatibility of reconciling ultra-Ritualism with the liturgy and Articles of the Church of England. But it must also be added that the same incompatibility exists between the character which the opposite party would fain fasten on the Prayer-Book and the positive language contained in it, representing as it does the intention of the Reformers both under Henry and Elizabeth. There can be no doubt, however, that the reactionist excesses have created profound dissatisfaction throughout the country. It is useless to investigate the nature of it. It exists, and must be reckoned with. Ministers, whether they take the matter into their own hands or leave it to be dealt with by private members, reserving to themselves the right of calling on their party to follow the lead of the Government in dealing with it, have a very difficult and delicate task before them. Illegal practices, says Mr Balfour, must be put down, but in such a manner "as shall not alienate a great body of opinion absolutely loyal to the Church, with which we may differ, but which really dislikes these practices as much as we do." These words are the key

to the Government policy. The great body of opinion here referred to is that of the old historic High Church party, represented by Sir John Dorington's deputation, who have no sympathy with "mediævalism," but would recoil from any solution of the problem requiring them to renounce those Anglo-Catholic principles which were recognised by the Reformers, and are represented in the Prayer-Book.

It may be asked why Mr Balfour thought it necessary to introduce this proviso. The reason is that, in common with most English Churchmen, he knows that the ultra party, by which the Liverpool Bill is promoted, have ulterior designs in the background, and would certainly not stop short at merely getting rid of such practices as have given to St Ethelburga's, St Michael's, Shoreditch, and St Mary's, Munster Square, an unenviable notoriety. It is this knowledge which has restrained High Churchmen generally from more openly expressing their disapproval of the Romanising ritualists. And it is this knowledge which must necessarily govern any measures either taken or approved of by Government for dealing with the lawbreakers, who, relying perhaps on the recognised difficulties which stand in the way of legislation, have carried their licentious audacity to lengths which have become almost unbearable, and may ultimately goad the country into accepting as remedies what they have

hitherto regarded as poisons. We have no doubt in the world that measures, from whatever quarter emanating, which had the effect of alienating any number of sincere and conscientious men, to whatever party they belonged, would be followed by disestablishment: and it is most devoutly to be hoped that no stone will be left unturned to find some way out of our trouble, before proceeding to extremities, which, if effective for the moment, would probably in the long-run prove more dangerous to Protestantism than the very system they were intended to suppress.

In the lately published 'Life of Bishop Westcott,' neither a Ritualist nor much of a High Churchman, we find the following testimony to the paramount importance of maintaining the National Church:—

"He did not ignore the possibility of a situation in which the inheritance of a National Church might have to be sacrificed, if the State should take some action that compromised vital principles of the Church; but he did not consider this to be seriously threatened for the present, except by the self-will of some of the clergy themselves. And his sense of proportion made him demand a patience which would not lightly throw away 'such a priceless heritage' for the sake of a paper theory or a transient alarm."

In writing to a clergyman from Bishop Auckland in November 1898, he says, "At the present time everything seems to me to fall into insignificance compared with the maintenance of our inheritance in a National Church." What that Church

is he told us in his speech at the Albert Hall in 1893 in words of great power and beauty; and he quite agrees with what Archbishop Davidson said to the deputation, already referred to, on the necessity of strengthening the hands of the bishops. "The best hope for the Church lies, I feel sure," said the Bishop of Durham, "in the clear affirmation of the final responsibility of bishops." And he shows how they are hampered at present by conflicting judgments.

Our reasons for thinking that the "alienation" spoken of by Mr Balfour would ultimately lead to disestablishment are easily explained. Religious parties in England are just as capable of secession as they were in Scotland sixty years ago. The Evangelical party in England, if denied what they held to be their just rights, might follow the example of the Free Kirk. The High Church party, if the repression of ritualism were carried so far as to threaten their own principles, might follow the example of the non-jurors. These are no imaginary dangers, and they were clearly foreseen by Bishop Westcott. Not long ago an influential layman wrote to the bishop of an English diocese, on a benefice becoming vacant of which the bishop was patron, informing him that if a High Churchman was appointed to it he should exchange his parish church for the neighbouring nonconformist chapel. On the other hand, the old High Church party with no

medieval leanings have plainly declared that they could not remain in the Church of England if handed over to the Genevan school.

If the whole party were offended, this spirit would spread, and an organised secession follow. The Evangelical secessionists would either join some Nonconformist Society or they would build churches and chapels of their own for services to be conducted according to their own ideas. But they would certainly not be satisfied to see their rivals left in possession of the field and calling themselves the National Church. They would combine with the old Nonconformists in demanding disestablishment, and they would get it. If the Established Church has to fight for her life even now, while she is still united, in what position would she be were the enemy reinforced by so powerful a body of auxiliaries as we are here supposing, who would then be able with some plausibility to declare that she had no longer any title to call herself the National Church? Yet to prevent this catastrophe difficulties have to be overcome which seem almost insuperable. Supposing, what is highly improbable, that, the bishop being shelved, the Low Church party obtained a decision in their favour from a civil tribunal on all the points at issue, this would only precipitate a similar convulsion in the opposite camp. If they failed in this object, the next demand would be for a revision of the Prayer-Book, which could not

be granted without alienating a much larger party in the Church than the Ritualists and the ultra-Ritualists put together. We do not anticipate for a moment that the complainants would get all they want from a court of law, whether civil or ecclesiastical. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council refused to set aside the Lambeth judgment. And any material departure from the views then expressed by the highest court of appeal to which ecclesiastical cases can be carried is hardly to be anticipated. But to complete our argument, it is necessary to put the other alternative.

Let us suppose, then, that in any further contest between the two parties the Evangelicals were victorious all along the line. We know that in that case, if they pushed their advantage, as they naturally might, to the uttermost, there would be an immediate secession from the opposite camp, by no means confined to Ritualists or ultra-Ritualists; and we need hardly ask what would be the condition of the Church of England after such a rupture. Many of the most highly cultured, deeply learned, and zealous men in the English Church are to be found among the High Church party. If the Establishment could not withstand the assaults of its enemies after an Evangelical secession, still less could it do so after an Anglican secession.

The deprived clergy, we are assured, would conduct their services in town-halls, assembly

rooms, or wherever they could find accommodation, carrying their congregations, as some of them have done already, wholly or in part with them, approaching nearer and nearer to Rome every day, till they were divided from her only on the question of supremacy, all Roman doctrine being accepted, taught, and carried out. As in all revolutions, the Ultras would carry all before them. Talk of the spread of Romanism in this country now,—what would it be then! Finding its way into all our towns and villages by a thousand new channels, it would soon obtain a hold upon the popular mind, compared with which its influence at this moment is child's play.

Let those who tell us that the laity would not follow the clergy explain why it is that the spread of what is understood by Ritualism is so much feared. If it has no supporters among the laity, how can it be spreading? We need not in that case be afraid of it. But the contrary is the truth, and the anxiety betrayed by its opponents shows that they know it. It is the lay sympathy with Ritualism which alone makes it dangerous. And if the existing law must be strengthened in order to neutralise the effect of it, what would it be when there was no law at all? This point we think has not been sufficiently considered. Would not the Romanisers be less dangerous in the Established Church, where they are still under some kind of control, however imperfect, than they would be

outside of it, where they could do exactly as they liked?

Thus by different roads we come to the same conclusion—namely, that by the process of alienation against which Mr Balfour warned us we should soon find ourselves driven to the separation of Church and State, with the loss of all those inestimable social and religious advantages which their union has conferred on this country. For the tolerant, enlightened, and comprehensive spirit which has hitherto distinguished the Church of England, we should have got in exchange the sectarian temper, with all its narrowness and all its arrogance. The clergy would be drawn from a different class, and for what they might lose in social consideration would naturally endeavour to compensate by the exaltation of their spiritual pretensions. We should have a Protestant Popery at one end of the chain and a Catholic Popery at the other.

To call attention to this danger has been our object in the foregoing remarks. But in order to avoid confusion we must add a word or two on the nomenclature of Church parties. We have used the term *High Church* by itself to denote the old historic Anglican party which has always existed in the Church through all vicissitudes. In our use of the word *Ritualism* we have done our best to avoid confounding together two parties who are really quite distinct from each other, though to the man in the street they are one. These are the Romanising Ritualists and

the non-Romanising Ritualists, who should properly be included within the ranks of the High Church party, as they melt into each other by almost imperceptible degrees.

We must conclude with a few words on the present state of parties and the condition of the Ministerial majority. Large parliamentary majorities—majorities, that is, of more than a hundred—even when quite homogeneous, seldom last for a whole Parliament without developing internal differences of opinion; and as these will not be confined to individuals, but will be shared by other members who happen to think alike on particular questions, groups are gradually constituted accustomed to act together, whom it is now the fashion to call *Caves*. Several such exist in the present House of Commons. They are by no means an unmixed evil: their activity and curiosity lead sometimes to very useful results. But it is a heavy tax on our charity to be required to believe that they are all equally actuated by zeal for the public good. Some will be acting in obedience to a necessity which new parliamentary conditions have created, others from less laudable motives. Every extension of the Franchise since 1832 has increased the number of members in the House of Commons, who are expected by their constituents to do something. Members cannot detach themselves from public business as they could do in the old days, when men like Sir John

Lowther, Asheton Smith, Lord Althorpe, or Lord George Bentinck dashed up to town for the division, and back again next morning for the hounds. That golden age has passed away. Men must attend to

the debates, know something of what is going on, and have something to say to their constituents when they meet them.

This is all very well; but there is another side to the picture. The situation we have described, besides entailing upon one class of members a degree of activity to which in the pre-Reform era they would have been strangers, affords an opportunity to others for making themselves conspicuous, for assuming an air of independence, and for causing the public, as they fondly hope, to exclaim, what fine fellows they are. The *Cave*, accordingly, seems now to have become a regular parliamentary institution, to be looked for every third or fourth session with almost as much certainty as east winds in March or yellow fogs in autumn. If we read it aright, however, we shall see that, so far from being dangerous, it serves in reality a very useful purpose, affording an easy road to distinction for gentlemen who, without such facilities, and denied any safety-valve for their vanity, might possibly become more troublesome to Government than they are now.

The state of parties at the present moment is often made the subject of much mistaken comment; just as people are frightened to death when

they hear the ice crack, though in reality it is perfectly safe: and to listen to some folk we should believe that Unionism was gaping at every joint. It would be more true to say that its enemies are perspiring at every joint. They find no vulnerable point in the enemy's harness at which their shafts can be aimed with any prospect of success. That their failure is partly owing to the badness of their own weapons, as well as to the strength of their adversary's armour, may be readily allowed. We do not ourselves regard the latter as impenetrable. But while the Opposition continue to assert principles which the country has repeatedly rejected, they can expect nothing better. Their violence is the measure of their weakness. The threat that when they return to power they will repeal—not amend, mind, but repeal, *in toto*—all the Education Acts and Licensing Acts of the present Government, is a proof of this. They would never say so if they saw any chance of being called upon to redeem their pledges. We can have no surer signs of the stability of a Government than the empty boasts of irresponsible hostility.

Those who mistake, as we believe there are some who do, the restlessness of groups for the disintegration of parties can neither remember the past nor properly appreciate the present. Caves, after all, are no new things. Young England was a Cave; but it was not Young England that overthrew Sir R. Peel or broke

up the Conservative party. There was a Cave during Mr Gladstone's first administration. But it was the irrepressible Irish Brigade that drove Mr Gladstone from office. Of course there are instances to the contrary; but we merely mention these facts to show that Governments which are strong in other respects have little to fear from malcontents who have nothing but errors of detail to allege against them. In 1866 Earl Russell's Government was not a strong one. His lordship was only a figure-head. Mr Gladstone and Mr Bright were the real Government, so that what we had before us was the spectacle of a Radical Government supported by a Palmerstonian majority. The result was inevitable. But the present Government is strong in the determination of the whole English nation to maintain the integrity of the constitution at home and the greatness of the Empire abroad. As long as these are threatened, Caves may be filled and emptied, ring-leaders may rise and fall, but the garrison Government will remain unshaken. Nor is it easy to see how the situation is to be changed without such a wholesale repudiation of first principles by one party or another as the most cynical politician can hardly anticipate. No Liberal Unionists, supposing any of them to be so inclined, which there is no reason in the world to believe, can join the present Opposition unless its leaders renounce Home Rule. If they do renounce Home

Rule, they lose the Nationalists; and if they lose the Nationalists, they lose all chance of a majority. On the other hand, supposing, what we have to apologise for suggesting, though only for the sake of argument, that any number of Liberal Unionists were found willing to adopt Home Rule, and joined the Opposition on that understanding, there would still be "the predominant partner" to deal with. The utmost that could happen would be what happened in '92, to be followed by what happened in '95, bringing us round again to exactly where we are now.

For another equally important recantation has to be made before Great Britain will return another Liberal majority, outnumbering both the Unionists, who still remained united, and the Home Rulers put together. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and the Little Englanders in general must gulp down all they have said about the South African war, and all the abuse they have showered on Imperialist principles, before the country will ever again intrust its destinies to their hands. We have had enough of surrenders and evacuations, and the terrible consequences flowing from them both in North and South Africa, to place confidence again in a party on whom the blood of Gordon and the bones of thousands of our countrymen mouldering in the desert seem still to call for retribution.

With all these experiences fresh in their memory, the public are not likely to listen

with much patience to such a speech as Mr Morley's at Montrose, even were it free from such blunders as we are surprised Mr Morley should have made. Speaking of an "alternative Government" he says—

"Reading through the events in political history, since the great dislocation of the Tory party, in the year 1847, on the question of Free Trade, you will find that from 1846 to 1859 you had got divisions. There was a small party of Protectionists, Tories, Palmerston Whigs, Russell Whigs, and Peelites, and the question which was constantly put was, 'Is there any possibility of an alternative Government?' But somehow or another, gentlemen, an alternative Government always turned up."

Yes: and what kind of alternative Governments were they that "always turned up"? Why, Governments that were always in a minority, that never lasted three years, and never once survived a dissolution. Does Mr Morley wish to restore such a state of things as that?

On the subject of empire his words are still more remarkable:—

"When I look back upon the empire of old Rome, and then upon the great later empire of Spain, I think that it would not be a bad definition of an empire to describe it as a State system that ruins itself by wasting its capital."

He relied, we suppose, on his hearers' ignorance of ancient history. Empires are not immortal. But an empire which, like the Roman, after five hundred years of conquest, lasted a thousand years longer as the Mistress of the World is good enough for our money.

Even supposing these various

parties to be capable of bolting all their pledges without choking, in what light would they appear before the public afterwards? In swallowing their own words on such a scale as this they would have swallowed their own characters, and be left without a rag of reputation to cover their moral nakedness. Is it likely that they could buy back public opinion by such shameless tergiversation as this, prompted as it would be by transparently selfish motives? Lord Rosebery would never consent to be the leader of such a party as this. The iron entered into his soul ten years ago. And it would be no good if he did. That "reconstruction" of which political quidnuncs in their high political jargon are fond of talking, lies on the other side of a range of difficulties which it will take many years to clear away. But whenever it comes we hope that Conservatives

will be prepared for it. It is idle to say that there are no Conservatives now. In all highly civilised countries with complex organisations like our own there *must* be Conservatives. Let both Englishmen and Scotsmen remember what they are fighting for when they stand up in defence of our political and social order—the monarchy, the Established Church, the territorial aristocracy, the network of municipal jurisdictions which teach men self-government and self-respect; the rights of property and the rights of labour, which encourage industrial enterprise and stimulate personal energy: let them reflect that it is not for their own sakes alone that we cherish these great institutions, but for the sake also of that which they have formed and moulded, and which is at the bottom of all our power and prosperity—the national character.

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PERSONALIA.

POLITICAL, SOCIAL, AND VARIOUS.

BY "SIGMA."

I. HARROW IN THE EARLY SIXTIES.

LORD PALMERSTON—LORD RUSSELL—LORD AMBERLEY—BISHOP COLENZO—
LORD BROUGHAM—DR MONTAGU BUTLER—DR CHRISTOPHER WORDS-
WORTH—SIR ROBERT PEEL—BISHOP OF SALISBURY—"BILLY" WEST-
COTT—THE MARQUIS OF BUTE—JOHN SMITH—DR FARRAR—LORD
GEORGE HAMILTON—MR LABOUCHERE—LORD CLARENDON AND HIS
BROTHERS—LORD CALEDON—LORD TWEEDMOUTH—ARCHBISHOP DAVID-
SON—MR JUSTICE RIDLEY—SIR FRANCIS JEUNE—SIR CHARLES HALL
—THE LORD ADVOCATE—I. D. WALKER—C. F. BULLER.

WITH the exception of its singular collapse under the Headmastership of Dr Christopher Wordsworth, of which more anon, Harrow has continuously prospered for upwards of a century. But perhaps it attained its zenith during the second and more famous Administration of Lord Palmerston, a statesman who, with a normal majority of little more than twenty, succeeded in investing the coun-

try with a prestige which it had not enjoyed since the days of Canning. The Prime Minister's position was unique, for, save in name, there was no Opposition: the word "party" seemed to have been obliterated by that of "Palmerston," and any attempt to displace the idol of the nation would have resulted in ignominious disaster.

Yet, strange to say, Lord Palmerston is nowadays but

scantly appreciated. "He was in no sense a great man," I was severely assured not long ago by an ultra-Liberal spinster, in response to a fervent eulogy of which I had, perhaps rather imprudently, delivered myself. "Well," I was stung into retorting, "if not great himself, he at least contrived to render the country great, which is much the same thing." My "advanced" neighbour (it was at dinner) took a sip of iced water, and with a pitying shrug changed the subject. Possibly she resented the irreverent manner in which Lord Palmerston was wont to treat the Cabinet rhetoric of her *beau idéal*, Mr Gladstone, whom an unkind fate had forced upon him as Chancellor of the Exchequer. "Now, my Lords and Gentlemen, let us go to business," was certainly not a flattering reception of the excited harangues with which, in the rôle of reformer-general, the right honourable gentleman used to deluge his colleagues after every parliamentary recess! But to a Premier whose foreign policy had placed England on a pinnacle, the "parochial mind" was naturally somewhat exasperating, and the "rises" which he took out of his didactic subordinate rankled even more deeply than the shafts of Lord Beaconsfield in later years. But of Lord Palmerston's persiflage I shall have more to say under another heading; for the present I will merely dwell on the effects of his renown upon his old school. The fact that the

great and popular Premier was a Harrow man naturally influenced the British pater-familias not a little, and many a boy who would otherwise have been sent to royal Eton was consigned to the humbler, if little less famous, foundation of John Lyon, Yeoman. Certainly the school itself was not insensible to the "Palmerston" halo, and it was a sight to kindle even the sluggish blood of the Fourth Form, when the jaunty old horseman on the knowing white hack trotted into the town straight from the House of Commons, where, with scarcely an interval, he had occupied a seat for nearly sixty years!

It was difficult to realise that one in every respect so essentially modern had actually stood for the University of Cambridge on the death of Pitt, was already out of his teens at the battle of Trafalgar, and (to us Harrovians, perhaps, more marvellous than all) had left Harrow before Byron came! Yet so lightly did his years sit upon him that an hour or so later he would be seen briskly trotting back to London, bound once more for the Treasury Bench, which he would only forsake in the small hours for one of his historic gatherings at Cambridge House. Brave, buoyant old Pam! Right well is he portrayed by that noble line in "Maud":

"One of the simple great ones gone who
could rule and dared not lie!"

We have had many statesmen since, some of them good

and true; but he was the last of the old, stalwart breed that made the name of England the proudest in the universe.

The mantle of Lord Palmerston's popularity did not fall on his successor, for only a year or two later it was my lot to hear "Johnny Russell" hissed as he descended the school steps on Speech-Day. The cause was not far to seek. Coerced by Mr Gladstone, he had already taken the first step of that downward career which Lord Palmerston had always predicted would follow his own disappearance from the helm. "After me," he used to say, "Gladstone will have it all his own way; and then, mark my words, there will be the very devil!" Regrettable as this demonstration against Lord Russell was, it only reflected the prevalent feeling that a strong and intrepid ruler had been replaced by palterers and experimentalists. In his earlier days Lord Russell may have rendered useful service to his party, but it is questionable whether, without his lineage and connection, he would have ever soared above an Under-Secretaryship. Petty-minded and unsympathetic as a leader, and not too loyal as a colleague, he passed out of the political world with a damaged reputation, which time has not tended to repair. What Queen Victoria, the most indulgent of judges, thought of him, her letter to Lord Aberdeen, recently made public, only too plainly shows. It consigns him to a pillory from which

not all the efforts of Whig piety can succeed in extricating him.

Lord Russell, though himself an old "Westminster," had three sons at Harrow, the eldest of whom, the eccentric Lord Amberley, sat at one time for Leeds, where he discoursed to his constituents on political and social questions with a startling frankness which savoured more of Tom Paine than of the alumnus of a great Whig family. One of his addresses, of a peculiarly audacious character, received the unenviable distinction of being censured by his former school's debating society, which carried unanimously the following sententious resolution: "That the speech of Lord Amberley at Leeds is a disgrace to the school at which he was educated." But it had, I fear, very little effect on the patrician Socialist, who, but for a premature death, would have probably gone down to posterity as a second Citizen Stanhope. Among his many antipathies was a rooted repugnance to the ceremonial of "grace before meat," and if compelled by a cruel fate to offer the hospitality of lunch to a clerical neighbour, he has been known to pay an advance visit to the dining-room, and to cut into a leg of mutton in order to convey the impression that lunch had already begun!

Lord Russell was not the only celebrity in those days who received the honour of sibilation at "Speecher," for I remember it being accorded

to that rashly investigating divine, Bishop Colenso, — the boys in this instance, again, giving rough-and-ready expression to the prevalent animus against the over-critical prelate. Poor Colenso, who had once been a Harrow master, evidently felt the indignity keenly; but he bore it with the quiet courage which he displayed throughout the long crusade against him, and made many of us, I think, feel somewhat ashamed of our savagery. The couplets which were concocted about Colenso's Biblical exploits were legion, though I remember none of any particular piquancy. The following was, perhaps, the most pointed, though the sneer in the second line at his mathematical acquirements was quite misplaced, as he had been Second Wrangler.

"There once was a Bishop Colenso
Who counted from one up to ten, so
He found the Levitical
Books to eyes critical
Unmathematical,
And he's gone out to tell the black
men so!"

The allusion to Speech-Day recalls a curious incident in connection with a very different man, Lord Brougham. As every one knows, he retained his extraordinary mental and bodily vigour almost to the last, and, when in his eighty-sixth year or thereabouts, eagerly availed himself of an invitation from the Headmaster to be one of the distinguished visitors on Speech-Day. As a compliment to the veteran orator, one of the monitors was told off to recite a "purple patch" from

some perfervid speech on which it was known that he particularly prided himself. This attention greatly flattered Lord Brougham's vanity, which had not diminished with the march of time; and at the conclusion of the recital, depositing a very seedy-looking hat on his chair, he sprang to his feet and vehemently applauded the interpreter of his bygone eloquence. But unfortunately, on resuming his seat he forgot that it was occupied by his hat, upon which he sank with very disastrous consequences! Of this, however, the expectant crowd of boys in the school-yard knew nothing, and when at the end of the speeches the Head of the School called from the top of the steps for "Three cheers for Lord Brougham!" we were convulsed to see them acknowledged by an individual in rusty black, with an "old clo'" broken-crowned hat almost resting on a nose the shape of which has since been emulated by Ally Sloper! But Lord Brougham's adventures did not end there. Evidently highly gratified with his reception, he passed on to the Headmaster's house, where, with the *élite* of the visitors, he was bidden to lunch. There, however, his self-esteem encountered a rude shock, for the policeman stationed at the door to keep off "loafers" and other undesirable company, sternly asked the dilapidated-looking old person his business. "I am invited here to lunch," growled out the indignant guest. "Gammon!" curtly responded the guardian of the

peace. "I am Lord Brougham!" was the furious rejoinder; "let me pass!" "Bah!" contemptuously retorted the bobby, "yer wants me to believe that, do yer? Move on!" At this critical juncture the old lord, inarticulate with rage, was fortunately espied by another eminent guest, who, taking in the situation at a glance, succeeded in allaying the suspicions of the policeman! It would have been interesting, by the way, if on that particular Speech-Day Lord Palmerston had also been present. How he would have enjoyed the joke, though there had been a time when he and his Whig colleagues had found Brougham no joking matter! The actual reason of the ex-Chancellor's ostracism by the Whigs in 1834 will, I suppose, like the authorship of 'Junius' Letters' and the cause of Lord Byron's separation, remain a secret for all time. A political Suwaroff must doubtless be an unpleasant colleague; still, his abilities were sorely needed by the Whig Government, and all his intractability and escapades would probably have been condoned had not his colleagues been possessed of strong evidence that he designed, by some traitorous *coup d'état*, to trip them up by the heels and force himself into the foremost place. Lord Melbourne's laugh never quite recovered its gaiety after the famous interview in which he broke to Lord Brougham the astounding news that he was not to return to the Woolsack. The *tableau* has only one parallel: when Lord

Wellesley was informed by "that cunning fellow, my brother Arthur," that he had proposed himself, and not the more intellectual Marquis, as head of the Government in succession to Lord Goderich! They never spoke again. That the great Viceroy, who had been as a father to the young captain of Foot, should be supplanted by him for the blue ribbon of politics was an offence which the elder brother's outraged vanity could never forgive!

Many of Lord Brougham's amazing exploits can only be accounted for by temporary mental derangement, and I have been assured on first-rate authority that at one time during his official career he was actually under restraint for the whole of the long vacation. His vanity was certainly of the type that borders on dementia, and any one who reads the egregious egotism and self-eulogy that characterise his correspondence with Macvey Napier must find it difficult to associate them with any one possessed of proper mental equilibrium.

Of the Harrow masters at this period three eventually became notable figures—the Headmaster, Mr Westcott, and Mr Farrar. Probably, as Master of Trinity, Dr Butler occupies a far more congenial position than if he adorned the episcopal bench; at the same time, it is somewhat surprising that he should never have been given the opportunity of refusing a mitre. His predecessor, Dr Vaughan,

was three times offered a bishopric, and in all fairness it must be acknowledged that Dr Butler's services to the School, if from various circumstances less conspicuous, were fully as valuable. Dr Vaughan had one signal advantage: he succeeded a Headmaster under whose *régime* Harrow was actually reduced to less than seventy boys, while Dr Butler had to follow an administrator who converted a period of unprecedented disaster into one of glowing prosperity. How Dr Wordsworth came to fail so signally it is very difficult to determine; but doubtless there were various contributing causes. One, a very curious one, was suggested to me many years ago by an old Harrovian, at whose house I was taken to dine by some friends with whom I was staying in the country. I chanced to mention Harrow, and finding that he had been there under Wordsworth, I asked if he could assign any specific reason for the *débâcle* of that period. He explained that, although Wordsworth was certainly not fitted for the post, that circumstance did not wholly account for the mischief; the principal cause, he maintained, must be looked for elsewhere. Among the boys then at Harrow was the late Sir Robert Peel, the brilliant but strangely unballasted son of the great statesman. At school, as in his maturer days, Peel was not too conspicuous for obedience to discipline, and being "sent up" for some iterated defiance of rules, he was informed by the Head-

master that but for his father being so illustrious a Harrovian, he would have been sent away on the spot; as it was, he would have to leave at the end of the quarter, a punishment which the boys euphemistically described as being "advised." Under all the circumstances this was an act of clemency which certainly deserved parental appreciation; but, according to my informant, Sir Robert with characteristic sensitiveness resented bitterly what he persisted in regarding as a personal affront to himself, and, so far from recognising Wordsworth's lenity, he vehemently denounced him to every Ministerial colleague or private acquaintance who either had sons at Harrow, or was intending to send them there!

Such an attitude on the part of an all-powerful Prime Minister (as Peel then was) could only have one result. Some boys were removed prematurely, others who were about to enter were sent elsewhere, and the run on the credit of the school, already somewhat impaired by Wordsworth's lack of qualifications, set in so steadily that when Vaughan arrived on the scene there was only a shabby residuum of sixty-nine boys, which the new Headmaster seriously thought of sweeping out in order to start entirely afresh! I cannot, of course, vouch for the accuracy of this statement, but it was made to me in all seriousness by a man of undoubted position and veracity; and in view of Sir Robert Peel's extreme sensibility to anything that affected the

reputation of himself and his family, it seems by no means improbable. It should be clearly understood that there was nothing disgraceful in the culprit's offence; but though not heinous in the eyes of the world, it was necessarily so in those of a Headmaster, who had no option but to visit it with a drastic penalty.

Dr Wordsworth's ineptitude as a school disciplinarian was hereditary, for I recollect his son, the present Bishop of Salisbury, taking my form at Harrow as *locum tenens* for the regular master, and presenting a deplorable picture of helpless uncontrol. Under his very nose every sort of impromptu recreation might be seen in full progress, including even games of écarté, while in a remoter part of the room a fight proceeded furtively between two sitting combatants! All the time the temporary instructor's gaze was riveted on his Virgil, the construer's voice being scarcely audible above the growing babel! I narrated this experience to one of the bishop's clergy not long ago. "Who would have thought it?" he murmured wistfully. "Things are very different now: he rules the diocese with a rod of iron!"

A schoolboy, at all events before he attains monitorial rank, mostly considers it *de rigueur* to disparage his Headmaster, and Dr Butler in his early days earned a certain amount of unpopularity by an irritating edict against the use of side trousers-pockets, which procured for us a good deal of

Etonian "chaff" at the annual match. But his dignity, courtesy, and sense of justice were on the whole properly appreciated, while any boy under the shadow of bereavement might always be sure of his ready and warm-hearted sympathy. Himself a most distinguished Harrovian, both as scholar and athlete, he had keenly at heart the fame and honour of the school, which has abundant reason to regard his Headmastership as one of its halcyon epochs. Had Lord Palmerston been in office when Dr Butler retired, his services would assuredly have received some more adequate recognition than a second-rate Deanery; but such Harrovians as were then in the Government had presumably not sufficient influence with the dispenser of preferments, though, curiously enough, two of Dr Butler's pupils—the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Worcester—have, with, in some respects, fewer qualifications (as they will themselves be the first to admit), been accorded the rank that was withheld from him. As Nelson used to remark, under similar circumstances, "such things are"; but in the Church, perhaps more than in any other profession, we are continually reminded that "the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong."

"Billy" Westcott, as he was irreverently nicknamed, was more fortunate, and his profound ecclesiastical learning no doubt amply justified his promotion to episcopal rank; but

if forty years ago any one had ventured to predict to a Harrow boy that "Billy" would be Bishop of Durham, and Dr Butler put off with the Deanery of Gloucester, the forecast would have been received with compassionate derision.

At Mr Westcott's was a boy who was also destined to play a conspicuous, yet very different, part in the religious world, though at that time his future sphere was probably not suspected even by himself. This was the late Marquis of Bute, who was probably the most solitary creature in the whole school,—not from any exclusiveness arising from his rank, but owing to an excessive shyness, which he retained more or less in after-life. His one frailty was a weakness for jam, and his absorbing passion, books. At that time he wrote rather promising English verse, by dint of which he gained the school prize for a poem on Edward the Black Prince; but he apparently abandoned verse-writing in his maturer days: none, at least, was ever given to the public. In spite of his high rank and splendid prospects, he seemed as friendless in the outer world as at school, for no one, I believe, ever came to visit him, except once an old nurse whom he brought into the Fourth Form Room at Bill, and showed the various classic names cut on the panels. Yet not half-a-dozen years afterwards this lonely, almost neglected youth was selected by an ex-Prime Minister as

his model for the principal figure in one of the most renowned novels of the century! The excellent qualities that marked his subsequent career were to some extent due to the influence of one of the under-masters, good old John Smith, a man of sterling character, if of few attainments, to whom many a boy has incurred a lifelong debt of gratitude. Honest, God-fearing, single-minded, he was in the school a power for good, the value of which was at the time never properly estimated, and to him might well be applied the beautiful words of Thackeray, that "when he went to Heaven the angels must have turned out and presented arms."

The late Dean of Canterbury was another Harrow master who was regarded as certain of a bishopric, though he, too, was compelled to content himself with a minor distinction. At the time of which I am writing he was doomed, intellectually speaking, to penal servitude with the third "shell," a form within measurable distance of the lowest in the school. This ordeal not unnaturally accentuated the picturesque melancholy that was always his characteristic; but to even the most gifted it is not permissible to ascend the scholastic ladder at a single bound, and with the prestige of 'Eric' and the Cambridge Prize Poem comparatively fresh upon him, he might very well have confronted his fate with more philosophic fortitude. Mr

Farrar presided over one of the snuggest of the "Small Houses," where he maintained excellent, if somewhat sentimental relations with his pupils, whose pleasant lot was enviously regarded by the inmates of certain more Spartan establishments. His melodiously delivered sermons, always founded on some more or less poetical text, were distinctly popular, romantic imagery and literary quotations being more acceptable to even the dullest schoolboy than dry homilies on doctrine, or aggressive platitudes on morals. In due course Mr Farrar migrated to a "Large House," which, however, was only regarded as a stepping-stone to a more important sphere, for the Headmastership of Haileybury becoming vacant very shortly after his promotion, he offered himself as a candidate for the post. The contest practically lay between himself and another Harrow master, Mr Bradby, who, although entering the lists almost at the eleventh hour, succeeded in beating Mr Farrar by a single vote. The disappointment was, under the circumstances, particularly acute, and hardly compensated for even by his subsequent election to the Mastership of Marlborough. But in the meantime he had by no means confined himself to scholastic pursuits. His books on "Language" had already secured for him the Fellowship of the Royal Society, as well as a "Friday Evening" lectureship at the Royal Institution, an appoint-

ment always eagerly coveted by scientific and literary aspirants. He had also formed many important literary friendships, of which, perhaps, the most notable was that of Matthew Arnold, then a resident at Harrow.

The contrast between the virile arch-foe of Philistinism and his somewhat emotional neighbour was curious, and at times comical. Well do I recall on a certain occasion the great critic's expression of half-contemptuous amusement at one of Mr Farrar's jeremiads over the miseries of his chosen lot, which concluded with the following pathetic climax: "As I was returning from chapel just now, I asked a small new boy with whom I was walking what he intended to be, and the boy, by way, I suppose, of ingratiating himself, replied, 'A Harrow master.' 'My boy,' I rejoined, 'you had far better break stones on that road.'" Inasmuch as the reverend martyr must at that time have been making out of this inferior alternative to road-making some thousands a-year, the dictum, despite its almost tearful delivery, did not sound convincing, and I am afraid there was just a tinge of good-humoured mockery in the laugh with which Matthew Arnold greeted it.

But a disposition to fall out with the ordinances of Fate, even when not altogether adverse, was always a characteristic of the good Dean. A friend of mine, one of his old pupils, met him on the Folkestone pier a day or two

after his acceptance of a Westminster Canonry, and genially tendered his congratulations. "Don't congratulate me, don't congratulate me," murmured the new Canon with sonorous dejection, and a wistful glance at the waves of the Channel! "H'm," piped the famous Master of Balliol on being told of the incident, "I must say I like a man to take his promotion cheerfully." But this is an attribute which was unfortunately denied to Dr Farrar. His quarrel with his publishers is a matter of Paternoster Row notoriety. He agreed to become our Lord's biographer for a stipulated sum, which, considering he was comparatively untried as an ecclesiastical historian, was by no means illiberal. The work, written rather in "special correspondent" style, proved a signal success, in recognition of which the publishers bestowed a honorarium, represented, I believe, by something like four figures. But the author characteristically evinced supreme dissatisfaction, and, likewise characteristically, ventilated his wrongs in the columns of 'The Times,' with a hurricane of uncomplimentary epithets at the expense of the unhappy publishers! Not content with this form of protest, he imported his indignation into the social circle by setting before his friends at a dinner-party a pudding ostentatiously deficient in any kind of condiment, which was defined in the menu as "Publishers' Pudding,"—a painfully elaborated jest which, needless to say,

such of his guests as were given to good living regarded with tempered appreciation.

Again, his non-attainment of the Deanery of Westminster after Stanley's death was a source of much ill-concealed disappointment, while his preference to Canterbury was accepted with a profusion of sighs and plaintive dissatisfaction. Still, in spite of his foibles (it would be hardly fair to call them defects), Dr Farrar deserves to be memorable, not only as a high-minded and sympathetic schoolmaster but as an ecclesiastical orator, whose eloquence, if a trifle too ornate, has not been equalled since the days of Archbishop Magee. Had he been born a quarter of a century earlier, and identified himself more decidedly with Church politics, he would have been a dangerous rival to Wilberforce, who in general acquirements was certainly his inferior.

This section must not close without a word or two about the Harrovians of the "early Sixties" who have since come prominently before the world. Perhaps the most notable among them is Lord George Hamilton, known at Harrow as "Squash" Hamilton, to distinguish him from his cousin, W.A. Baillie Hamilton, who was a member of the same House, and went by the nickname of "Wab," a euphonious sobriquet for which he was indebted to his initials. Lord George, though, like all his family, well endowed with ability, did not at Harrow give much promise of becoming a Secret-

ary of State before he was forty. But public school "form" is very seldom to be trusted as an index of future success. When we attempt to trace the career of the mere prize-winning prodigy he is only too often to be found in the ranks of the utterly undistinguished—a briefless barrister, a country clergyman, or a humdrum Government official; while, given certain indispensable conditions, the unpromising idler who rarely soars above the last five places in his form, and leaves school with less knowledge of classics and of his country's history than might be claimed by many an aspiring artisan, is often revealed in after-life invested with Cabinet rank and charged with the destinies of half an empire. But in order to achieve success of this kind at least three contributing factors are indispensable: family influence, good natural abilities, and the incentive of ambition. Of the three the first is probably the most important; and it is no disparagement to the present Secretary for India to affirm that without family influence it is highly improbable that he would have become a prominent Minister of the Crown.

He began life as an ensign in a crack regiment of Foot, but when in 1868 a Conservative candidate was required for the important constituency of Middlesex, Mr Disraeli, with whom the Abercorn family had always been prime favourites,—he gave its chief a dukedom, and subsequently immortalised

a daughter of the House in the pages of 'Lothair,'—perceiving in Lord George the type of young politician which always strongly appealed to his imagination, recommended that he should be entered for parliamentary honours. Possibly but for a quarrel between the two Liberal candidates, Lord Enfield and Mr Labouchere (the "Labby" of to-day), the extremely youthful Conservative candidate—he was then not more than twenty-three—would have come off second-best. As it was, he contrived to win the seat for his party, much to the gratification of Mr Disraeli, who duly noted him down for subordinate office, which, however, was not bestowed till 1874, the elections of 1868 having proved fatal to the Conservative Government.

Since that time Lord George's political career has been continuously prosperous, and if some of his old schoolfellows have viewed his rapid aggrandisement with a certain amount of surprise, it may be truly said that not one of them has grudged him his success, while the Governing Body has testified its sense of the distinction he has conferred upon Harrow by electing him one of their number, in which capacity he worthily represents his father, himself a governor for nearly half a century. With reference to the Middlesex contest of 1868, I believe it was the last parliamentary election at which, in London at all events, personal "squibs" were placarded on the walls. One couplet I well remember.

It related to Mr Labouchere, who had shortly before been involved in some rather comical dispute abroad with a foreign baron, whose stature apparently was in marked contrast to the dimensions of his cane, for the doggerel ran thus—

"Run away, Labouchere, run away
quick;
Here comes the small man with the
very big stick!"

Lord Enfield, the other Liberal candidate, was, I think, the sitting member. At all events, I remember his addressing the Harrow electors from the "King's Head" portico in the general election of 1865, and his being interrogated from the top of the "King's Head" 'bus by the well-known "Squire" Winkley, one of the principal local tradesmen and politicians. The Squire, whose somewhat inordinate social aspirations did not contribute to his popularity, was hailed by the boys gathered outside the "King's Head" with a good deal of derisive vociferation, which he rather imprudently resented, for in the midst of his harangue the unhorsed omnibus began slowly to move from before the inn door, and amid the "inextinguishable laughter" of the crowd and the frantic gesticulations of the intrusive politician, he was conveyed to a distance where his eloquence was no longer audible. His pretensions were certainly rather ludicrous. To his residence (over his shop) he gave the sonorous name of "Flambards," and it was always understood (though I daresay without any

real foundation) that his sobriquet of "Squire" arose from his having invested himself with that title during a holiday tour. Some travelling acquaintance (the story went) to whom he had thus magnified himself, happening one day to come to Harrow, be-thought him of his fellow-traveller, and seeing at the station an old hawker with a donkey-cart, asked him if he could tell him where Squire Winkley of Flambards lived. "What!" exclaimed the old hawker, "my damned proud nevvie? Why, over his shop, of course, in the High Street!" Another legend about him, even less credible, was that he had asked Dr Vaughan, in recognition of some function he fulfilled in connection with the School, if he might wear a cap and gown. "That's as you like," was the discouraging answer. Nothing daunted, the Squire then asked if the boys might touch their hats to him. "That's as they like," the Doctor again replied, with contemptuous suavity. But however apocryphal the story, it had a certain vitality, for the Squire was almost invariably greeted by the boys with the salutation which he was reported to have so vainly courted, but in such a marked spirit of mockery as to drive the recipient almost frantic with affronted dignity.

The Squire also served not infrequently as a target for pea-shooters from the windows of masters' houses adjoining "Flambards." On one occasion, when in solemn con-

clave with some one he had buttonholed in the street, a deftly directed pea from an unseen marksman suddenly and sharply hit him on the cheek. I happened to be close by, and shall never forget the outraged air with which he complained to a passing master of having been "shamefully assaulted in the public street, while in confidential conversation with a mutual friend of myself and the Earl of Clarendon!" The master, as in duty bound, professed indignation and sympathy; but the culprit, who was perhaps not too diligently sought for, was never discovered.

The Earl whose name had lent such impressiveness to the Squire's complaint had three sons at Harrow, all of whom subsequently made their mark. The eldest, the present Lord Clarendon (then Lord Hyde), is Lord Chamberlain; and had his bent been more political, might fairly have aspired to high Ministerial office. The second son, the late Colonel George Villiers, was an accomplished soldier and diplomat; and the youngest brother, Mr Francis Villiers, occupies a highly important post in the permanent department of the Foreign Office. All these were members of Edwin Vaughan's house, which harboured most of the "patricians," especially those from the Emerald Isle, where Mrs Edwin Vaughan, an extremely charming woman, had many connections. Several of the "Young Vaughanites" became in due course popular Irish landlords, notably the

late Lord Caledon, a Household Cavalry officer of the best type: soldierly, straightforward, and unassuming, who retained throughout life the genuineness and simplicity that characterised him as a Harrow boy.

Another embryo politician who gave little promise of attaining Cabinet rank was Edward Marjoribanks, now the second Lord Tweedmouth, who became one of the most adroit and diplomatic of party "whips," and occupied the post of Lord Privy Seal in the last Liberal Administration. At Harrow he was chiefly conspicuous for a ready plausibility which, if unappreciated by his pastors and masters, has rendered him excellent service in the work of party management; nor did he reveal much promise at Christ Church, where he belonged to a famous set more remarkable for social than scholastic achievements, and whence he withdrew, like his ex-chief, Lord Rosebery, without the adornment of a degree, owing to a difference with Dean Liddell concerning the amount of respect due to College statuary. But to a "gilded youth" of Great Britain such a *contretemps* is of very little consequence. Having sown his wild oats harmlessly enough, Mr Marjoribanks betook himself to ploughing the political furrow with a vigour and dexterity which a double first-class would probably have considerably impaired.

Among ecclesiastics, Harrow

of that day can boast a noteworthy representative in the Archbishop of Canterbury; while to the law it gave Mr Justice Ridley, Sir Francis Jeune, the late Recorder of London, and the present Lord Advocate. The Archbishop is, again, an instance of the "unexpected." At Harrow he displayed no special ability, and though compelled by an untimely accident to content himself at Oxford with a "pass" degree, his previous university record had scarcely augured any conspicuous achievement in the Honour schools. Nevertheless he revealed as an undergraduate certain valuable qualities which strongly impressed Archbishop Tait, whose only son was one of his most intimate college friends. The Archbishop, who wisely accounted ingratiatory tactfulness and sound judgment more important traits in a modern English ecclesiastic than mere scholarly attainments, however brilliant, quickly recognised that the young clergyman was not only calculated to render him excellent service as a lieutenant, but in process of time to figure with credit and influence in the high places of the Church. Nor was Dr Tait the only personage who formed a favourable opinion of young Mr Davidson. Queen Victoria, who had an early opportunity of becoming acquainted with him, was equally prepossessed, with the result that at the age of only thirty-five he was awarded the much-coveted Deanery of Windsor, in which he earned the esteem and ap-

preciation of the Sovereign in a higher degree than had been the case with any previous occupant of the office, excepting, perhaps, Dean Wellesley. His subsequent advancement has been invariably attended with an increase of reputation, and by his promotion to the Primacy he has succeeded in winning for his old school an honour which, however little anticipated in his days of pupilage, is universally admitted to be completely justified. Probably his fine tact and delicacy of feeling were never more felicitously exercised than on the occasion of his enthronement at Canterbury, when his graceful tribute to his old master, Dean Farrar, who was present at the ceremony, must have been particularly soothing to the veteran whom he had so signally distanced. It is noteworthy that during the last fifty years Harrow has furnished two Primates: one in the person of Dr Longley, a former Headmaster, the other Dr Davidson, an "old boy"; but before the latter's elevation no Harrovian proper had, I believe, attained the highest honours of the Church.

Harrow has never been a great recruiting-ground for the Judicial Bench, nor in that respect has Eton, I believe, been much more fertile. Mr Justice Ridley, known at Harrow as "young Ridley," in contradistinction to his elder brother, the late Home Secretary, had, like the latter, a singularly brilliant career both at Harrow and at Oxford; but it is pretty certain that

but for his near relationship to an influential Cabinet Minister he would never have been promoted to a seat in the High Court, where, if he has his inferiors, he can scarcely claim to be ranked among the rapidly diminishing number of "strong" judges. Had he cast in his lot exclusively with politics he might very probably have gained a considerable, if not a first-rate, position; and as a finished scholar, and distinguished Fellow of All Souls', he would have added lustre to a Government which is strangely deficient in University prestige. But where an elder brother has attached himself to politics, the younger, even if equally gifted, usually adopts some other career. Edward Ridley, accordingly, decided upon the less congenial calling of the law, and after the short parliamentary apprenticeship which every legal aspirant considers indispensable, was awarded an official refereeship, from which he was eventually advanced to a puisne-judgeship.

It is a curious circumstance that both these brilliant brothers should in performance have fallen so far short of their early promise. The effacement, however, of the late Home Secretary must have been due to some other cause than that of inadequate capacity for the office which he held. Possibly he was not sufficiently acceptable at Court, and another Cabinet post of equal importance could not be found for him; but it certainly was a surprise to behold him kicked

upstairs with the tinsel solatium of a viscount's coronet, receiving little better treatment than the merest political limpet!

Sir Francis Jeune is the eldest son of the third of that trio of Heads of Houses who were known in Oxford as "The World, the Flesh, and the Devil." In spite of his sobriquet, Dr Jeune became successively Dean of Lincoln and Lord Bishop of Peterborough, the latter of which preferments he owed to Mr Disraeli, whose ecclesiastical sympathies were with the more moderate branch of the Low Church party to which Dr Jeune belonged. Francis Jeune was more proficient than prominent at Harrow, whence he proceeded to Balliol, achieving there considerable distinction, which, however, hardly pointed to the measure of success he has since attained in the legal world. Equipped with a Hertford Fellowship, he was called to the Bar, where in his early days he very wisely did not even disdain a police-court brief. Indeed, his tact and dexterity would have qualified him for any department of advocacy, though those strange bed-fellows, Ecclesiastical and Divorce Law, finally attracted most of his forensic attention. But he was equally at home in the highest tribunals, and I have heard Lord Selborne, who was not prodigal in his compliments to counsel, pay a marked tribute to his arguments in the Court of Appeal, on an occasion when he was opposed by the law officers of the Crown and other legal mag-

nates. As a judge, though he cannot claim to rank with such predecessors as Cresswell, Wilde, and Hannen, he discharges his functions with dignity and credit, and being also Judge Advocate-General enjoys the unique privilege of exercising a triple jurisdiction—in matters military, nautical, and connubial.

Sir Charles Hall, known in his House as "Gentleman" Hall, owed his eventual position partly to his parentage—his father was a Vice-Chancellor—but mainly to his social qualifications, which procured for him powerful friends in high places. His knowledge of law was far from profound, but he had sufficient acumen and dexterity to enable him to conduct any case entrusted to him at least creditably, and to qualify him in the long-run for a silk gown, which he wore with an air of dignity and distinction that was the admiration of every lay onlooker. His manners, too, were as unexceptionable in as out of Court, and unquestionably won for him no small degree of favour. With these advantages, and a county seat in Parliament, he was eminently fitted to fill the post of Attorney-General to the Heir Apparent, which he did with particular satisfaction to his illustrious patron. The Recordship of London involved, however, from a legal point of view, far more serious responsibilities, and when Sir Charles was elected to the post in preference to other candidates of more weighty professional attainments, it was feared that he

might find some difficulty in adequately sustaining the rôle of a criminal judge. Such, however, was not the case; and if his court did not quite uphold the prestige it had acquired under Russell Gurney, a judge who certainly ought to have adorned a superior bench, it more than maintained the reputation handed down by his immediate predecessor. That he found the Corporation duties attaching to his office congenial I should not like to say; but he fulfilled them with excellent taste and judgment, though he must have occasionally laughed in his sleeve at the contrast between the manners and customs of St James's and those of the Guildhall. But however that may have been, he managed to preserve unruffled relations with both quarters of the town, as much at home with the representatives of Gog and Magog as with the *élite* of Marlborough House.

"For either sphere pre-eminently fit,
Whether with Prince consorting or with
Cit,
In Royalty's saloons a radiant star,
Or charming tradesmen east of Temple
Bar!"

The present Lord Advocate was an accomplished pupil of the late Bishop of Durham (Dr Westcott), to whom he would occasionally cross over from the House of Commons and chat on old times. At Harrow he combined elegance of scholarship with considerable skill as a racquet player; and if he left Cambridge without having quite maintained the promise of his school-days, he carried

away with him more than enough learning for all the practical purposes of his profession. His charm of manner and *savoir faire* have been serviceable allies to the sound abilities which he has always displayed in the course of a somewhat varied legal career; and Scotland may be congratulated on being represented by a law officer who, in culture and personal distinction, if not in actual professional attainments, is a worthy namesake of the illustrious Mansfield.

Of the Harrow cricketers in the early Sixties, I. D. Walker and C. F. Buller were, I believe, the only ones who afterwards became famous, F. C. Cobden belonging to a rather later period.

I. D. Walker, who *in statu pupillari* looked quite as old as many of the masters, provoked, I remember, considerable sarcasm from the Etonians at Lord's, several of them asserting that he was a veteran smuggled back for the purposes of the match, a charge to which Walker's rather wizened countenance and premature side-whiskers afforded some colour. "Lord's" was in those days much less of a "Society" resort than at present. The price of admission to all parts of the ground did not exceed sixpence; there were no stands (excepting, of course, the old M.C.C. pavilion), and very few seats, the majority of the spectators (who were unrestricted by ropes) sitting on the grass, while carriages, riders, and pedestrians mingled indiscriminately, under rather precarious conditions. The

"chaff," or, as the respective Headmasters more ceremoniously defined it, the "ironical cheering," was then in full swing, and though amusing enough to the vociferators, was a terrible ordeal to the players, and an unmitigated nuisance to the adult portion of the assemblage. To be obliged to deliver a ball to the strident accompaniment of "Bubba—Bubba—Bowled!" (I spell the preliminary exclamation phonetically), was to any boy with even good nerves hideously disconcerting; and it was a profound relief when, a climax of discord having been reached, the Headmasters succeeded by their adjurations before the next match in stopping, or at all events in mitigating, the nuisance.

C. F. Buller, though less useful, was a far more brilliant player than Walker. He was, in fact, almost universally brilliant, even his schoolwork, when he condescended to do any, being no exception. He was the son of Sir Arthur Buller, an ex-Indian judge, and the nephew of Charles Buller, the promising Whig statesman, much of whose charm and talent he had inherited. Both his father and his uncle were pupils of Thomas Carlyle; but Sir Arthur, at all events, conveyed no suggestion of the fact. Like his son, unusually handsome and distinguished-looking, he had more the air of a Pall Mall cynic than of a pupil of Chelsea's rugged sage. He idolised his boy, whom he appeared to treat more as a younger brother than as a son,

and very seldom missed coming down to see him play. I well recollect him sitting in the little pavilion on the old Harrow ground, between the steps of which some nettles had begun to intrude rather aggressively. "Here, you boys!" exclaimed Sir Arthur imperiously to some small boys seated on the steps, "I wonder you allow nettles to choke up the place like this. Clear them away, can't you?" The small boys, who were engaged in vicarious refreshment, did not relish this haughty command from a visitor, and took no notice. "Ah," observed Sir Arthur with a withering sneer, "if I had said that to Eton boys, they would have done it."

The influence and prestige of C. F. Buller at Harrow can only be compared to those of Steerforth in 'David Copperfield.' Even the masters fell under his spell, and though not sufficiently high in the School to be entitled to "find"—i.e., to have meals in his own rooms—he was specially favoured in this respect by his tutor. At

football (which he always played in patent-leather boots!) he excelled as greatly as at cricket, while I think he is the only schoolboy on record who has accomplished a wide jump of twenty-two feet. With the gloves, too, he was invincible; and many a braggart town "chaw," who thought to challenge his supremacy, used to retire from the encounter chastened and unrepresentable.

He passed into the 2nd Life Guards (by the way, he used to say at Harrow that the only exercise he could not accomplish was to ride!), where his popularity and prestige were such that his brother officers twice paid his debts rather than he should be lost to the regiment. Eventually, however, financial exigencies compelled his retirement, and in other respects fortune ceased to smile on him; but to all Harrovians of the "early Sixties" his name is still one to conjure with, pre-eminent among the many that will ever be recalled with affectionate admiration.

THE CLIMAX.

BY KATHERINE CECIL THURSTON.

I.

MICHAEL PRENDERGAST shut the door of his dispensary with a bang that sounded down the empty street, then lounged back against it and slowly lit his pipe. The life of an Irish doctor in an Irish village is peculiarly his own—as aloof from interference as his rough tweed clothes or his manner of speech. The pipe drew badly; with the deliberation that characterised all he did, Prendergast made his position more comfortable and struck another match.

It was an exceptional September day. Across the roadway the thatched roofs looked warm and brown as clustered bees; to his right the ducks clamoured vigorously round the village pump; to his left, where the street curved, a fragment of sea showed between yellow and white washed houses like a steel band against the dazzling sky. He was no self-analyst, but he was aware of the light clear warmth in a lifting of spirit. Unconsciously he moved forward, and, looking up, let his eyes rest with a certain contentment on the battered house that spelt routine in his daily life—at the crooked window-sashes and the notice of his attendance in half-obliterated black letters on a white painted board: the whole comfortable discomfort

that he had at first chafed at, then tolerated, at last learned to call life. For there is no place in the world where the lotus-eater matures more rapidly than in the solitary island shadowed by hills and lapped by tides. Like many another, Prendergast had begun life with purposes and energies; but the people, the atmosphere, the very soil of the country, are alien to such things: the solid wall of influences had prevailed, and his nature had dosed to sleep.

He was still gazing at the notice-board, still ruminating pleasantly—the tobacco in his pipe glowing as he drew and let go his breath—when a sound in the deserted street roused him. A man's laugh—its echo in a girl's voice—then footsteps, partly muffled in the sandy dust of the roadway. He turned abruptly, raised his cap, then drew back a step into his original position, slightly disconcerted for almost the first time in his recollection.

The girl's form was familiar—familiar enough to bring the slow blood to his face; but the man's was new, with the intolerable newness of an unexpected, unreckoned-with thing. He glanced over the slight figure in its spotless flannels, and felt suddenly and hotly conscious of his rough-out

tweeds: then the feeling fled before a fierce pang of self-disgust at his momentary weakness. At this precise moment the two in the roadway paused. The man looked coolly interested, the girl flushed with unwonted exhilaration.

"Good morning, Doctor Prendergast," she said. "This is Mr Astley, the friend from London that we expected last night. His boat was kept back by the fog. He only arrived from Cloghal two hours ago." She spoke a little hurriedly, glancing from one to the other. Strangers were few at Roscoe, and introductions rare.

When she ceased speaking there was a pause. A group of fishermen passed, carrying nets and lobster-pots, and the ducks by the pump scattered in confusion. Prendergast shifted his position awkwardly: the stranger, with absolute unconcern, screwed in his eyeglass, and surveyed him as he might an interesting monument.

"How d'you do?" he said.

Prendergast squared his wide shoulders. "This is a tame spot after London," he remarked. "How does it strike you?"

The other smiled. His smile, like everything from his immaculate panama to his doe-skin boots, was cool and complete: it altered his face just enough to show a perfect row of teeth, but it left his satirical questioning eyes untouched.

"The place is interesting," he said; "but it's the people I've come for. I'm rather studying the Celt." His words

dropped out with great conciseness, each syllable out and clear. Prendergast unconsciously began knocking the ashes out of his smouldering pipe. At this point the girl interposed.

"Mr Astley is writing a great book," she said, "and he's hunting for uncultivated types. Isn't that it?" She looked up with naive admiration at the thin clean-shaven face.

The last shred of tobacco fell to the ground, and Prendergast raised his head. "He won't have to look far," he said.

Nancy Odell glanced round quickly. Ill-humour was new in Prendergast.

Astley let his eyeglass drop from his eye; it dangled from its string in the sun. "No," he said smoothly; "I've discovered that for myself."

The veiled sarcasm escaped Nancy; but Prendergast, without fully understanding it, flushed.

"Good-bye, Miss Odell," he said. "There's work waiting up at my place." He held out his hand.

The girl looked puzzled, then distressed. "Good-bye," she said. "And will you dine with us to-night? I know father wants you to——"

He hesitated. Her eyes were on his; Astley was lost in contemplation of the dispensary. "Very well," he agreed brusquely. "Thanks!" Lifting his cap, he turned on his heel and strode down the street towards his own house.

The new-comer turned, his

lips curved into sarcastic amusement. "Miss Odell," he said, "I owe you an unpayable debt. I thought they had extinguished the primitive man some hundreds of years ago."

II.

Prendergast reviewed many things that evening as he climbed the steep hill to the Odells'. It seemed that chance had taken Rosscoe—its picturesqueness, its lethargy, its negativeness—and, shaking it rudely, had set it down again in altered circumstances.

The sight of this stranger, with his cool superiority, his insolence, exhaling another atmosphere in every breath, had altered the very face of accepted things. The World had penetrated into the Wilderness, which in our day is tantamount to the Snake in Paradise.

He threw back his shoulders and quickened his pace; he held his head high, but there were misgivings in his heart. With slow exactness he ticked off events from the hour of his arrival in Rosscoe four years before, beginning with the damp, drizzling day on which he had caught his first glimpse of Nancy Odell riding up the village on her chestnut cob—a slim girl of seventeen, with the longest and blackest eyelashes he had ever seen and hair still bound in a dense thick plait. He recalled their first meeting and his subsequent invitation to the old house crumbling away under its ivy; and with the memory came his first impression of Nancy's father, Denis Odell, the man who after a brilliant career at college had returned to Rosscoe on his

father's death, had taken up life there, had married, and had gradually, by a process so slow as scarcely to be discernible, passed from the ranks of those who do to the ranks of those who dream. He remembered everything—the whole chain of pleasant uneventfulness; the days that slipped to nights, the nights that merged to days, while outside, beyond the guarding sea and the wall of hills, life went on as usual—fevered, despairing, hopeful, tireless in its steady round. He stopped suddenly in his walk. What had he really done in those four years? The question glowered at him abruptly out of the falling dusk; with unaccustomed force it stormed his mind. He had done his duty, had earned his reputation for goodness of heart, had been charitable in his modest way. But what mite of knowledge had he given to the storehouse of his profession? What had he contributed towards the future of his own life? A great blank met his view—an appalling yawning void. For two whole years he had been placidly in love. Until to-day the need to put even that love into expression had never touched his mind. He had been content in the silent acknowledgement of the fact. Nancy knew that he cared for her—must know it, he had reasoned; and for the rest—they were young, there

was time enough. There was time enough! That had been his philosophy till now. Now somehow everything was changed.

His fingers moved with loose uncertainty as he opened the iron gate, then with a more hasty step than he had used for years he crossed the wide path to the house—the gravel crunching under his feet.

In the hall he was met by Odell. The old man looked unusually alert: some of the light that had been in Nancy's eyes that morning seemed to have passed to his.

"You've seen young Astley?" he said almost at once, linking his arm through Prendergast's and drawing him down the corridor to the drawing-room.

Prendergast answered churlishly in a monosyllable. Though he had expected the words, he resented them now that they were said.

"A clever fellow! A man with a future! It has warmed my heart to see him, Prendergast. His father and I were old friends. Poor Ned! He had a great spirit, but he lacked the grit of this youngster. He belongs to the newer era, eh?"

He laughed with his hand on the drawing-room door, and for the first time Prendergast felt a tinge of alienism in the familiar house. It seemed that the brown walls stared down at him with an unaccustomed air, that there was a new note of criticism in the jar of the turning door-handle. Then he moved forward into the lighted room.

The room—so large and so

suggestive of faded splendour, was softened by a great glow of candles; there were fresh curtains on the long windows, and the bowls of stock on the ancient grand piano seemed more numerous and more fragrant than usual. He felt each infinitesimal difference as he moved forward and took Nancy's hand.

In Nancy, too, there was a change. Her usual cotton dress was discarded for a muslin the colour of her eyes; her beautiful hair was coiled with new care; a long gold chain, the only ornament she possessed, was twisted round her neck. Her youth, her charm, her buoyancy, struck Prendergast with a shock. He turned abruptly to where the other guest stood.

Astley came forward, and they shook hands. In dark clothes he looked even slighter of build and paler of face—the coldness of his eyes alone defying all changes of attire and alterations of light. His fingers pressed Prendergast's swiftly, then relaxed. They left the impression of steel—so firm and so lacking in all warmth was their touch.

"Miss Odell and I have been discussing temperaments," he said suavely. "I hold that reaction is the keynote of the Celtic nature; that the more lethargic it seems, the more volcanic its outbreak when the climax comes." He stopped and adjusted his eyeglass.

Prendergast felt his blood stir at the cool inquisitiveness of the stare, but he controlled the emotion.

"Such topics are beyond Rosscoe," he said. "Here the climax comes first, and we talk about it afterwards."

Astley inclined his head to one side and surveyed him attentively. "Then you never self-analyse?"

"Never!" rose emphatically to Prendergast's lips, but his host interposed.

"Dinner awaits us," he said. "We go in without ceremony, Astley—Doctor Prendergast knows that."

Prendergast straightened himself, drawing back against the piano to let Nancy pass; but Astley moved silently forward, and held the door ajar for her. He was rewarded with a very sweet smile as she passed into the hall.

That dinner lingered long in Prendergast's mind. Astley—superlatively interesting in ordinary moments—seemed to develop a fresh side when partaking of a meal. Where the rural mind grows dull, his galvanised. He talked much and talked well. Prendergast sat silent and oppressed while he touched on current literature, lingered over Socialism in its last developments, and rounded neatly off with a personal view on European politics. He watched Odell's absorbed face and Nancy's mystified admiration; then steadily enough his gaze moved on to the mirror hanging on the opposite wall and paused on his own reflection. The picture it rested on was not calculated to reassure. The eyes that met his own lacked colour, the skin had an

uncertain tone, the sandy hair refused to lie flat; lowering his glance, he arrested it once more, this time on the ill-knotted tie and badly fitting coat. How many times, he wondered, had he sat in that same seat and viewed that same image with no glimmering of shame, while he criticised the new schoolmaster or discussed the prospects of the potato crop! At the thought he set his teeth.

Twice Astley appealed to him; but his ideas were glued together, and his answers were wide of the point. More than twice his host tried to draw him into talk; but the geniality sounded like condescension to his overstrained ears, and he responded ungraciously. His emphatic sense of failure hardened into pride. He thought savagely of the degrees he had taken, of the hours he had sweated, of the whole uphill fight, with little money and few friends, that had landed him where he was. As the thoughts came quick and bitter, the servant entered with coffee, liqueurs, whisky, and hot water. With an impulse new in its directness, he pushed back his chair and rose. To the three surprised faces turned towards him his expression seemed unchanged; to himself it felt convulsed and strange.

"Miss Odell," he said, "you mustn't mind if I say good night. There's a poor woman on the cliff who wants seeing to. Old Mary Troy, sir,"—he turned to his host. "She's not long for this world, and I promised I'd look in before the night was out."

Odell looked up. "Tush, man! It's the old story. They're always going, and never gone. Sit down and have a glass of punch."

His tone was cordial, but Prendergast saw his eyes turn back expectantly to Astley's face.

"Thanks, sir; but it's a true bill this time. Good night." He nodded to Astley. "Good night, Miss Odell." His eyes rested on Nancy's face and his hand sought hers.

She pressed his fingers warmly, but her smile was preoccupied, her attention also was elsewhere. It was a curious fact, that of the three faces the one turned most steadfastly in his direction—the one to show most interest in his movements, most attention to his words—was that of his fellow-guest.

"Good night," Nancy said quickly—"though you don't deserve even that. But if you must go, tell Mary I'll come and see her to-morrow before twelve. I ought really to have gone to-day."

"All right. Good night."

Odell followed him to the hall and helped him into his overcoat. As he rolled up the collar, Astley's succinct voice reached them from the dining-room.

"So you are Lady Bountiful? You make me wish I had an

interesting disease and a cabin on the cliff."

Odell laughed. By an immense effort Prendergast echoed the sound, then, shaking hands hurriedly, he opened the door with a wrench and passed out into the chill quiet.

Leaving the grounds, he turned—not upwards towards Mary Troy's cottage, but downwards, steadily and directly to the sea. Deception in any form was foreign to him, but the moment had come when he must have a new atmosphere. Leaving the road, he gained the rocks by a foot-path, and, crossing them with steady, accustomed feet, paused on the outer ledge, took off his cap, and let the air blow strongly through his rough hair. Outwardly he was calm and dogged; so also, by a strange affinity, was the mass of water at his feet. The oily sheen of autumn was over the black waves as they sucked and murmured in sullen quiet. The primary elements of his nature dumbly understood the restrained power and answered to it. He stood for some minutes breathing in the moist salt air; then he turned and slowly retraced his steps. As he regained the road he stopped.

"I'll tell her to-morrow," he said aloud. "I won't wait another day."

III.

But man proposes. Next day an urgent message called him to the boundary of his district, over the worst roads in

the county, and night was falling before he reached home. The following day a fresh obstacle arose, and on the third

another. A week passed, and he had not yet seen Nancy alone. To a more impetuous nature the delay would have been insupportable. In Prendergast it called up the dogged fatalism that lay deep in his character, and something of his old philosophy rose again reassuringly. There was time enough! Men like Astley might flit across the horizon of Rosscoe, disturbing its elements, but in due season they must inevitably flit away again and be forgotten. He stated this to himself on the seventh night after the Odells' dinner, as he sat in his lonely room by the light of his solitary lamp; and he reiterated it in the sunlight of the next morning, as he unpacked a chest of drugs brought by the post, and laid the contents on the window-sill of the dispensary, to await sorting. The philosophy was still in his mind as he sauntered across the cliff later in the day—his gun on his shoulder, his dog at his heels. His eyes were on the heather in front of him, his battered brown pipe was well aglow, when he paused in the midst of his meditation, arrested by a voice behind him.

"Hallo, Doctor! Where are you off to? Haven't seen you these hundred years."

It was the voice of Denis Odell; and, turning, Prendergast saw him emerge from one of the narrower tracks into the wide path that encircled the cliff. He looked brisk and healthy; there was a new spirit in his voice.

"Had any luck?" he asked. "We heard you banging away."

"Nothing to talk about." Prendergast spoke absently; he was speculating on the change in his companion. In all the years of their acquaintance he had never known Odell to leave his room, much less his house, before afternoon.

The other saw his thought. "You're wondering," he said. "It's the touch of the world that's done it. Why did none of you here ever tell me I was vegetating? I'd have mouldered into the graveyard ten years before my time if Astley hadn't turned up to rejuvenate me. He's like one of your tonics, Prendergast—bitter to taste, but powerful in results." He laughed.

Prendergast shifted his gun uneasily. "You've been showing him the caves?" He nodded towards the track Odell had just ascended.

"Yes. The three of us have been exploring, and I've beaten the two of them in the climb back. Not bad for a dried-up recluse, eh?" He laughed again.

"No." Prendergast shifted his position and whistled to the dog. He knew that he himself could scarcely have outstripped Nancy in the ascending of a cliff had she cared to reach the summit first; and at the thought the first fully comprehended pang of jealousy shot over his senses. But instantly he shook it off. What had this stranger to do with Rosscoe, or life at Rosscoe? Nothing. He moved once more impatiently, and the dog stirred.

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"Down, Rose! Quiet, old girl!" He looked uneasily towards the side path. The

thought of Nancy and the stranger alone on the brown rocky track filled him with ungovernable thoughts. Then suddenly his mood changed and lightened; his faith flowed back. "I hear them!" he exclaimed. "They're coming! This is a new experience for Mr Astley." He laughed with a great reaction; there had been a terrible moment, but the moment was passed. He went forward quickly and looked over the cliff.

Nancy came first, her blue eyes alight, her hair blown about her temples. She walked over the boulders and loose earth of the track with the erect ease she would have shown on a level road; a pace or two behind came Astley, his pale face a shade or two paler than usual, his thin lips apart. The girl was the first to see Prendergast; she blushed quickly and then smiled.

"Doctor Prendergast!" she exclaimed. "Where in the world have you been hiding yourself all this time?" The words were slight, the tone hurried, but they were sufficient to bring the blood in a slow tide to Prendergast's face. Unconsciously he raised his head, and met Astley's amused, sarcastic gaze.

"I have been working," he said.

Nancy gained the path and her companion followed. As he reached Prendergast's side he raised his eyebrows.

"Does anybody ever work in Ireland?" he asked innocently, disentangling his eyeglass string.

Odell laughed. "Look out, Astley!" he called. "I'd have broken your father's head for that thirty years ago. Come here, little girl," he added, "and give me an arm home. That climb was pretty stiff after all."

Astley and Prendergast drew back, and Nancy went forward, patting the dog's head as she passed. Odell took her arm affectionately, and they turned towards home.

The two men, left alone, stood silent and uncertain. A second passed, then another; at last Astley broke the pause.

"Where there's no alternative, Doctor," he said, "it's best to philosophise. Will you walk home with me?"

The delay that followed was acute in its suggestion. Prendergast kicked at a tuft of heather, then looked down in deep contemplation at his boot; Astley, his head inclined to the left, his eyes gleaming with sarcastic query, watched him with steady attention. The thought in each mind was visible—in the one, keen, unemotional interest; in the other, active distrust. The position was slightly ludicrous. Astley laughed.

"Come," he said, "we each have our point of view. I am superlatively irritating in your eyes; you are superlatively interesting in mine. Now, your profession is one of philanthropy. Will you walk back with me?"

The tone stung Prendergast, but the words amused him. His humour, lifeless for a week,

roused itself, and he echoed the other's laugh.

"Just as you like," he acceded. "I suppose I am a bit churlish; we get like that from being alone."

Astley took the apology in wise silence, and they moved forward towards the bend round which Nancy and her father had disappeared. They walked slowly; it was a day to be lazily enjoyed. The cliff was splendid in its fading heather, the wide sweep of sea shimmered copper rather than gold; everywhere lay the colours and the peace of an autumn afternoon. Prendergast eyed it placidly in the calm appreciation that time and custom bring; Astley, after one cursory glance, took no further notice of the scene, but fixed his whole concentrated interest on the man by his side. He looked as the entomologist looks when he pins a new and rare moth to his setting-board.

Looking back upon that walk, Prendergast could never remember precisely what they talked about. He had a certain after-impression that Astley had been even more brilliant and more individual than on the night of the dinner; that slowly and by reluctant degrees his own innate dislike and distrust of the man had thawed before his caustic charm, till he had been drawn to discuss his life, his work—even his sentiments. That was his impression; but his impression, seen in the clearness of after-know-

ledge, is like a phantom light in presence of the sun—a poor, untraceable thing, without colour or form. His first clear recollection dated from their pause at the point where the cliff track stopped and the road began. Far away in the distance the figures of Nancy and her father were discernible, heading steadily for home; above them the corn-fields rolled away—yellow and cropped and cleaned of their treasure; below was the village, the rocks, and the strand. The spot invited rest; Astley was the first to stop. Screwing in his eyeglass, he turned sharply on his companion and surveyed him deliberately with the old look that so roused antagonism.

"This visit to Ireland has meant a good deal to me," he said.

The tone he used was peculiar—so peculiar that Prendergast lifted his head. In an instant the partial softening of his feelings was arrested; he drew back into himself—once more watchful, suspicious, ill-at-ease.

"What do you mean?" he asked. The art of polite preamble was unknown to him.

For a moment Astley made no answer. He looked across the bay to where the second headland showed shadowy in the haze. Then he looked slowly and deliberately back at Prendergast.

"I mean that Miss Odell has promised to be my wife," he said.

IV.

It was many hours later that Prendergast unlocked the door of the dispensary, and, leaving it ajar, walked upstairs. He walked slowly and heavily—the toes of his boots stumbling methodically against each uncarpeted step, the sleeve of his coat rubbing against the white-washed wall. Entering the bare consulting-room, he paused: his gun hung from his hand; the dog, a yard behind him, stood attentive and surprised. For several seconds he stayed immovable, then, stirred by some untraceable thought, he lifted the gun, looked at it, and laid it aside. Taking off his cap, he passed his hand slowly and perplexedly across his hair.

How he had parted with Astley, what he had said, how he had borne himself, belonged to some vague, long-past time. He had a shadowy memory of a cold concise voice, and of cold, amused, intensely inquisitive eyes. Then came a knowledge of escape and a recollection of walking—walking on and on, without sense of distance or destination, in a fruitless attempt to outstrip himself. With the remembrance of his walk he looked quickly down at his boots caked with red mud; then with the dazed, vacant look still on his face he crossed the room to the window overlooking the street.

On the window-sill stood the packing-case that the post had brought, the strewn shav-

ings, the phials and boxes of varying size. He looked at them stolidly, with difficulty connecting them with himself. Each one had been given its place that morning by a man in the strong confidence of life, each was glanced over now by a man who had lost the very bearings of existence. Once more he passed his hand heavily over his hair.

To emphasise his feelings in that hour would be impossible—he had none to emphasise. Neither rage nor loss nor desolation held any part in his comprehension. He was merely stunned.

For well over ten minutes he kept the same position—his hands hanging by his sides, his eyes fastened unseeingly on the litter before him; then swiftly, by one of those tiny incidents that change events, he was brought back to movement. The dog, lying under the table, stirred in its sleep, stretched its paws shiveringly, and yelped. The sound, so familiar and so commonplace, roused him.

"Wake up, Rose!" he said unconsciously. "Wake up, old girl!"

The sound of his voice in the still room was hollow: the dog sprang up, twisted its body, yawned, and came forward, wagging its tail. A second later it thrust its nose amongst the *débris* of the window-sill, sending one small bottle rolling to the ground.

Prendergast stooped and recovered it. It was a narrow

bottle, neatly packed with fine white grains, and bearing a significant label. As he drew himself upright again he held it to the light, his face grimly relaxed.

"One pinch of this, Rose," he said, "and——" But he didn't finish. With a sound half fierce, half ironical, he broke off sharply, and, holding the bottle between his fingers, walked the length of the room. Three times he paced from end to end, then pausing, he laid it aside in his ordinary drug cupboard, and continued his promenade with empty hands.

He walked persistently for three minutes, as a prisoner might tramp a jail-yard; then once more he paused, surprised into quiet by a fresh sound—the sound of steps on the carpetless stairs outside. With a first impulse he turned to annihilate the intruder, then something in the steps themselves—something in the soft, considered mounting, held him mute. The dog walked to the door and growled. The growl steadied him.

"Down, Rose!" he said roughly, and moving past the animal he threw the door wide.

In the passage the pale face of Astley accosted him sharply through the dust. He drew back, and his visitor made a step forward; the light of question still flickered in his eyes.

"I rather thought of consulting you professionally," he began, "and finding the door open I came up. Have I transgressed?" He laughed, but

his cold voice was more alert than usual, his words more clipped.

In silence Prendergast drew back into the room.

The other still halted on the threshold. "Have I transgressed?" he asked again.

"You may come in." Prendergast forced the monosyllables. At the first sound of the chilling voice his whole mental mechanism had undergone a change. As a cold douche sends the blood tingling, the first word uttered by Astley had slashed his lethargy into bits. All the silent antipathy that existed from the first, all the new, intolerable sense of wrong that lay dormant in his mind, flooded up and met. At school he had earned the reputation of being hard to rouse: as he stood now by the deal table, conscious in every pore of Astley's presence, he remembered by a strange linking of ideas one memorable day in that same school-life on which he had, single-handed, fought and conquered three boys of his own size. At the recollection he crossed the room rapidly and stood once more by the window, looking down into the deserted street.

Silently Astley moved forward, and in his turn also paused by the table. "The fact is," he began, "my nerves gave me a bad time this morning, and have left the legacy of a splitting head. It struck me to come to you for relief——" As he spoke he leant forward; the light from the small windows was growing momentarily duller. A September evening

falls rapidly once the sun has dropped.

"A headache?" Prendergast said the word dully: he was aware, in a strange uncertain way, of a tightness—a sense of congestion in his own brain. "A headache?" he said again.

"Yes; a headache."

The words reached him, but their meaning left him untouched. Without definite object he walked back into the room, and, passing Astley, paused once more by the cupboard in the wall. His hand strayed to the door-hinge and fumbled there: the motion was unconscious, but it raised a new query in his visitor's attentive eyes.

He left his place by the table and drew closer to Prendergast by two steps.

"Make me a dose," he urged; "you have the materials under your hand." His voice was at all times distinct; when he chose he could make it vibrate like a bell. As he spoke now he used all his power, and in direct and violent response a change passed over Prendergast. He lifted his head, straightened his shoulders, and once more passed his hand across his hair. By some inexplicable force the blood that had seemed massed in his brain rushed darkly over his face—roaring in his ears, dancing before his eyes. He had been moving, living, talking in a dream; now abruptly he was awake, conscious of himself and of his loss, with a consciousness that ran direct, without offshoot or divergence, into one channel—the channel of violent, jealous hate. In that instant of

enlightenment, every impulse and every feeling concentrated to a point, he understood everything from the first moment his eyes had rested on Astley to the present hour; each item, each incident, each idea turned on the same pivot—jealousy. Jealousy! On the spur of the thought he half turned, his hand clenched; then, with a motive altogether novel, he paused on his impulse, and slowly, quite slowly, turned back, facing the cupboard once again. Astley's words seemed to hop in material form between the bottles, to stare at him from the shelves. "Make me a dose; you have the materials under your hand!" Harshly, smoothly, suggestively—in every varying note they were shouted and whispered in his mind.

"What do you mostly take?" he asked. The words came steadily enough, but it didn't seem that the voice that spoke them belonged to him.

Astley came forward another step. "Oh, anything—anti-pyrim or the other stuff—anything you like—" He, too, seemed slightly and unaccountably perturbed, but the perturbation escaped Prendergast. Such a man in such a moment is oblivious of everything but his own dominant thought.

His face had a grey pallor, his hand fumbled continuously with the hinge. "Heart sound?" he asked, without turning round.

For an instant Astley made no reply, then he laughed with deliberate, sarcastic point. "My dear doctor, what a question to a man in my posi-

tion! Surely Miss Odell is the authority there." The words were light, but they were meant to cut, and they fulfilled their mission. Prendergast made no remark. For a complete minute he remained absolutely motionless, absolutely mute; then picking up a wine-glass he carried it across the room, half filled it with water, and returned to the cupboard and his former place. His face still had a leaden tinge, his eyes were fixed: without a glance at Astley he leant forward—his wide shoulders robbing the cupboard of light. With jerking fingers he uncorked a bottle, measured a pinch of white powder and spilt it into the glass; then, having added two other ingredients, he turned round. His face was expressionless and without movement, save for the throbbing of a nerve at the corner of his mouth—a curious vehicle of feeling that answered to no control. Without a word he held the glass at arm's-length.

The light in the room was failing. Astley, with slightly nervous haste and head inquisitively thrust forward, moved to his side.

"This is the dose?" he asked, his hand half extended, his eyes bright with question and surmise.

Prendergast saw each detail, and his innate physical loathing of the man rose overwhelmingly. "Yes; this is the dose," he said in a dull voice, and thrusting the glass into Astley's hand, he walked to the window and stood looking out.

All men have their dark—their terrible hour—to be lived through, struggled through, crawled through, as the case may be. How long Prendergast stood by the window and stared through the dusty panes matters not at all: whether a moment or a lifetime, the issues were the same. He stood while the savage tide of his jealousy leaped up in fire and fell back to water—running in trickling sweat down his forehead from his hair. Then at last he turned. All life seemed gone from his face, and he stooped like one who has passed through great physical exertion, but the strained look had left his eyes. Whatever his fight had been, it was fought through.

The room seemed very dim as he turned, but the glint of the glass as his patient raised it slowly caught his eye as lightning might have done. He sprang forward; the dog made a frightened sound—half bark, half cry; Astley stepped backward, overturning a chair. For a bare instant all was confusion; then Prendergast drew back against the wall and wiped his face. The dog had run to him and was fawning on his feet; Astley, with a colourless face and a smile on his thin lips, was twisting and re-twisting his eyeglass string; between them on the ground lay the shattered fragments of the wine-glass, its spilt contents running in a thin stream across the boards.

That night Prendergast did not go home; but when, worn

and exhausted, he let himself into his house next morning at six o'clock, the first object that met his glance was a propped-up letter on the hall-table. It was a thick letter in a square envelope, addressed in an unfamiliar hand.

He had entered the house with inert movements. With the same inertness he picked up the envelope and tore it apart. It bore the date of seven o'clock on the previous evening—exactly half an hour after the moment at which he had watched Astley pass down the dispensary stairs. He scanned the first lines dully; then a change passed over his face—the dark tide of blood that suffused his skin in emotion swept over it, he turned with unsteady fingers to the signature, then returned to the first page and read the letter to the end. It was carefully and concisely worded—the writing distinct and small.

"MY DEAR DOCTOR," it began, "I am your debtor under two heads—I owe you my apologies and my thanks. I came to your village with a purpose and a theory; by your

unconscious help I leave it to-morrow with the first fulfilled and the second verified. In short, I came here to find you the quite lethargic hero of a very promising comedy, and, having a turn for human theatricals, I conceived the idea of playing scene-shifter and audience in one—of providing a climax and watching the lethargic hero live through it. From your point of view the act was unwarrantable; but, as I once explained to you, a point of view is a very prejudiced affair at best, and when all is reckoned up no solid harm has been achieved. I have gained an insight into the Celtic nature by a means no more genuine than your dose of—shall we say antipyrin? And for the rest, Miss Odell is entirely charming; but such pleasant pastimes as love and marriage lie in more worthy—or should it be more suitable?—hands than mine.—Yours faithfully,
JAMES ASTLEY."

Prendergast read the letter to the end, word by word; then slowly, dazedly, unbelievably, he turned back to the beginning and read it through again.

LANCE, SWORD, AND CARBINE.

THERE is a general and not unnatural feeling of uneasiness with regard to the future of British cavalry. It has, almost more than any other arm of the service, recently come in for much criticism and remodelling. Many changes have been introduced into its organisation, methods of instruction, and armament, which, to those responsible for them, no doubt appear to be completely justified by cogent reasons, but have not all commended themselves to a mass of soldiers of no inconsiderable practical and theoretical knowledge, and have, it must be confessed, in some instances been very hurriedly made. Presumably the experiences of our late war in South Africa have had much influence on the minds of our military authorities, but these experiences cannot be allowed to be conclusive with regard to war in general; and it is to be feared that perhaps the strong impression that they made on those who felt them has in some degree obscured the wider outlook which should be taken by men who have to deal with broad principles capable of universal application. Our struggle with the Boers was a great war, as regards its duration, the melancholy losses that it caused, and the vast efforts which it entailed upon our country; but it was altogether abnormal in most of its conditions, and was only an exaggerated form of the many fights which we have had on the borders of our empire ever since we became a world-power. There is really no more reason why we should deduce decisive rules of military conduct from the late experiences of South Africa than from the Zulu and Afghan campaigns. As Colonel James very clearly points out in his lately published and most masterly treatise, "To say that tactics found successful against an irregular foe like the Boers in an extraordinarily difficult country like South Africa would be equally successful in Europe against a well-trained and well-equipped modern army desirous of giving battle, would be erroneous."¹ Our cavalry in South Africa especially laboured under every conceivable disadvantage, and it had, in consequence, very few and very restricted opportunities of showing its true power in battle. From the very first it was more or less paralysed by the condition of its horses, and this from no

¹ 'Modern Strategy,' by Lieut.-Colonel Walter H. James. W. Blackwood & Sons. This most valuable and instructive work should be in the hands of every English soldier, young or old. What would the present writer have given in his early days of soldiering for such a guide, philosopher, and friend! Every father who has a son in the King's army should take the earliest opportunity of giving it to him. To know it thoroughly will be to have had a liberal military education.

fault of its own, but on account of the way in which it was put into the field without any of the care and precaution which the most ordinary knowledge on the part of high authority might have dictated. There were two great occasions, at least, on which we had a force of cavalry present, when it might have struck such a blow in time-honoured fashion as would have gone far towards finishing the war at one stroke. On one of these occasions, though the horses were fairly fit, the general in supreme command did not launch them at the foe, who would have been at their mercy. On the other, though it was such a one as cavalry officers have ever dreamed of as a glorious opportunity, the horses were so weak and exhausted that few of them could have gone out of a trot. If, on these two occasions, our cavalry had had the meed of fortune which was their due, is it likely that we should now hear so much about the necessity for altering almost everything connected with the methods and equipment of that arm of the service? Are we never, in the future, to see a general in command of our field army who will let loose his cavalry when the favourable time comes; and are we never again to see our squadrons mounted on effective animals in good condition and fit to gallop?

It is now the time—and it is of intense interest to soldiers, whose business it is to fight, and to the British public, who have to pay their expenses—

to consider the arms of our cavalry, and to find out, if we may, how far some recent changes have been justified. First, again to quote Colonel James's treatise, "Cavalry must not abandon the *arme blanche*. Our South African experience has shown that in a *mêlée* a rifle is a poor weapon; and collision with the foe, however difficult of attainment, should always be the cavalryman's desire. The moral effect and the actual loss thereby inflicted is far greater than can be obtained in any other fashion, and these opportunities will still occur when the enemy has been driven back demoralised by previous fire-action."

Well, if cavalry must have an *arme blanche*, it remains to weigh the comparative merits of lance and sword, and to see whether the former has really deserved the lately pronounced sentence which has relegated it to practical obscurity. That it bore the highest character as a weapon till a very recent date is proved by the resolution taken within the last fifteen years to arm a large proportion of all dragoons with lances, and by the transforming within the last six or seven years of the 21st Hussars into a Lancer regiment. Presumably this wholesale adoption of lances in our cavalry was not entered upon without due consideration, and the probable use and employment of cavalry in modern war had been reckoned up by the distinguished soldiers who then swayed the destinies of our

army. Has any circumstance or series of circumstances occurred in South Africa (for it is obviously there alone that we can look for enlightenment) which has certainly proved the opinions of five years ago to be mistaken? The comparative value and probable use of the shock-power of cavalry must here claim our attention for a moment, as it is an essential factor in our subject. Colonel James, to quote him yet again, says, "It is impossible to believe that cavalry, as cavalry, can be used in a pitched battle as part of the attacking or defending force, and certainly not in the former." And this is no doubt perfectly true under most conditions; but it may still be believed that there are many quite possible circumstances (e.g., surprise, foggy weather, or flank attack) which would prove this opinion to be somewhat beyond the truth. However, even assuming that his denial of confidence in cavalry shock-power as regards a ranged battle is correct, still it must be expected that an enemy may some day be encountered who possesses a large force of cavalry; and when that day comes the conflict will not be confined to a long-range discharge of firearms, but will be decided in the old fashion by a rush to close quarters. Then again, as has been said above, demoralised infantry will inevitably prove easy victims to a charge of cavalry. What would have happened if the Boers at Magersfontein had had a few

squadrons of real cavalry with which at once to follow up the effect of their terrible fire-action? That question has been put to an officer who was there, and his answer was, "Something like a *débaclé*." In the cases of pursuit after a victory or the attack made on points in an enemy's line of communications, it is clear that rapidity of movement, which means the use of the *arme blanche* and shock-power, must be the main characteristic of the action.

And it is to be remembered that it is not a very difficult thing to demoralise a man (at least to a sufficient degree to make him somewhat uncertain in his defence), however well armed he may be, by the sudden and rapid attack of a ponderous and powerful assailant. Possibly some readers of this may have been fortunate enough to do some big-game shooting in their time. If so, let them recall the (shall we so call it?) diffidence with which they regarded the charge of a wounded bison, buffalo, or tiger. Even when quite prepared for the emergency, armed with the best rifle in the world, in the best bodily condition, and possibly with another sportsman hard by ready to aid with a cross-fire, does not a man breathe a sigh of relief when the woodland affray is over and the attacker has been disposed of? And how often has it been the case that even the best and coolest sportsman has failed at close quarters to fire a shot that

would paralyse a charging animal, and has suffered accordingly? Would not an angry lancer in full career be a more awe-inspiring object than a wild beast? And will the ordinary soldier usually have more *sangfroid* than a jungle-hunter? A modern infantry soldier, too, cannot absolutely rely on the stopping and paralysing power of the bullets which he discharges so freely. This has been particularly brought home to us by the late experience in the Somaliland campaign, and what will be the effect of this upon steadiness and confidence?

Now let us see what are the necessary characteristics of a good lancer, specially as a lancer, and putting aside all the other qualifications, mental and physical, that we desire to have in a cavalry soldier. A lancer cannot be improvised, any more than a good marksman with a rifle; and it is not likely that any man can become an expert in handling a lance in less than two years from the day when he first grasps it. He may be to a certain extent formidable in a less time, but he will not have acquired the familiarity with the weapon that will give him complete confidence in it under all circumstances. And, if the lance is to become a trusted friend, it should never be out of a man's hand, whether mounted or dismounted, unless it is replaced by the rifle. It is the unconscious possession of the balancing grip, coming quite as much from constant com-

panionship as from the routine of drills and practice, that gives the mastery over any weapon. A lancer need not necessarily be an extremely powerful man; but it is certainly desirable that he should have sufficient length of limb to secure a strong seat in the saddle, and as much leverage as possible for the rapid swing which will give due value to point and butt. A lathy man of from 5 feet 7 inches to 5 feet 9 inches has all the physique that is necessary; and even if he is not a Hercules, the dictum of the old diminutive stage coachman applies to him, "Vot the big uns does by strength, ve little uns does by hartifice."

It may here be remarked that the restrictions placed upon the method of using the lance in mounted practice combats—such as may be seen at military tournaments—have a tendency to give to the spectator a somewhat false idea of the weapon's capabilities, and may also in some degree reduce the confidence in its power in the man who uses it. If in these mounted combats the lance-shaft was firmly gripped under the right arm as in the "engage" taught in the lance exercise, or as, to use a more popular expression, when it is couched, a blow from its point, even when muffled, would very likely hurl an opponent from his horse and possibly inflict serious injury. It is therefore ordered that the lance shall not be so gripped, but is only to be held in the hand, and the thrust is made

by the power of the arm alone, unaided by the weight of the man's body and that of the horse. This, of course, is reasonable enough in a mimic encounter, but it at once deprives the lance of more than half its power for offence, as its thrust can be comparatively easily parried because it is not firmly supported, and the formidable nature of the attack is entirely discounted. In serious fight the lancer would naturally use his weapon in the most effective way, and at a gallop would be a very different opponent from the somewhat tame person who appears in the arena of the Agricultural Hall.

Above all things, it is necessary that a lancer should be a good horseman, and should ride a well-broken horse in good condition. If we are in the future to be content to forgo the careful riding-school work which has formed a main feature of our cavalry training for many long years, to ask only that our troopers in general shall have that moderate amount of horsemanship which is requisite to enable mounted riflemen to move rapidly from place to place, and to understand that never again are we to see good horses in good condition on a battlefield, then without question the days of the lancer are past, and indeed the swordsman is in little better case.

There is in England no more perfect exponent of the lance's merits than the Commander-in-Chief himself, and it is inexplicable how he, with his

mastery of the weapon and the many reminiscences that he has of good service that it has done in his hands, can ever have been persuaded to sign the late orders concerning it. Whether, as a young officer, he ever carried a lance in war cannot be said, but no man ever followed the "old grey boar" more keenly than he, or used a more effective hog-spear. And an impression of an Indian scene twenty years ago comes back very clearly to the mind. There is a great gathering for military sports of officers and men from all parts of India. All the distinguished Europeans in the Presidency are on the ground, and a huge native crowd in many-coloured turbans surges up to the barriers. The tent-pegging is going to begin. A single horseman, first on the list of competitors, darts down the course, whirling the long spear round his head with practised hand. His little grey Arab devours space at the speed of the best blood of the desert. Down comes the spear-point, and as it comes up again, the peg is seen transfixed. "Beautifully taken!" shout the Europeans. "Shabash! Shabash!" cry the natives. Who is the brilliant horseman? It is Sir Frederick Roberts, Commander-in-Chief in Madras. He is mounted on Vonolel, who carried his master through the Afghan campaign and is allowed by the Queen proudly to wear the war medal on his breastplate.

In modern war it was Poland that first sent regiments of lancers into the field. The

great Napoleon, recognising their value, embodied them in the French armies, and we, learning from his experience, introduced the lance into our cavalry in 1816. But the real home of the lance is in India, and we all recognise the typical Indian warrior of the olden time in Sir Alfred Lyall's "Old Pindarri":—

"When I rode a Dekhani charger, with the saddle-cloth gold-laced,
And a Persian sword and a twelve-foot spear, and a pistol at my waist."

And it is in India especially where we shall find the spirited highly broke horse which lends itself to every wish and movement of the rider. All our magnificent native cavalry are armed with lances, and if the English edict is to have general effect in our Eastern Empire, it will come like a revolution, carrying results that may be almost disastrous. It is in India that our cavalry soldiers have learned that exercise of tent-pegging in which they have made themselves more than the equals in proficiency of their teachers,—an exercise which our rank and file are now to be permitted to retain and practise as a recreation! When the lance is condemned as a weapon there is small probability that it will be cultivated as a plaything, and the concession is but of fictitious value.

But to sum up a lancer's qualifications. He must have long and familiar acquaintance with his weapon, and confidence in it; good but not necessarily excessive physique,

and he must be a thorough horseman and well mounted. These are not by any means impossible conditions. They have easily been fulfilled, not only by the lancers of our own but by those of other nations in the past, and there is no apparent reason why they should present any possible difficulty in the future.

And for the peculiar merits of the lance itself? No one can doubt its moral effect, and moral effect is in war almost more important than physical effect. Here may be quoted the words of a 'Times' correspondent in South Africa, published on March 7, 1901. They are prophetic of the present situation of our cavalry, and they speak from the writer's personal observation of the moral effect of the lance:—

"The cavalry in South Africa have now had their weapons taken away, have been re-armed with the infantry rifle, and can no longer be called cavalry. I have little doubt that, in consequence of this, an outcry will be raised that the days of cavalry are past, and that lances and swords had better be hung up in the Tower of London with the other obsolete weapons, as relics of a bygone age. In this connection, however, let me remind your readers of what I witnessed on the 15th February last year, when three squadrons belonging to the 9th and 16th Lancers cleared the way for the cavalry division that relieved Kimberley, and what looked like a desperate resistance on the part of the enemy was overcome in about six minutes by a small force of resolute men, relying on their lances only and the speed of their horses. Had these horses been burdened only with a fair weight, few of the enemy would have been left to tell the tale; but a pursuit of

the lightly weighted Boer by our men riding 20 stone is a fruitless operation.

"But, even as it was, the moral effect of the dozen men or so killed by the lances was, I am sure, greater than had 100 been killed by rifle fire—so great is the Boers' detestation of cold steel."

We have been told also, upon the authority of a Boer leader, that, when the English cavalry was deprived of its special weapons, there was joy in the Boer camps, for even the off-chance of an attack with lances had always made the Boers very nervous and ready to quit positions which they would have confidently defended against musketry fire alone. And this is more than confirmed in page after page of that most graphic picture of Boer character, 'A Burgher Quixote,' recently published. There is only space for one quotation of the Boer hero's words, but it is typical of many that might be made: "I could hardly believe that the name of 'Lancers' would not prove of mighty effect; for not even the news that the Kafirs were making a night-attack during the Magato campaign produced such fear as the name of these British soldiers with what the Burghers, in their ignorance, called 'long sticks with knives,' just as they always miscalled swords 'long knives.'"

The deadly efficiency of the lance as a disabling weapon cannot be denied, and is far superior to that of the sword. If a lancer and a swordsman, or a body of lancers and a body of swordsmen, meet in

full career, no one who has had any practical experience of the two weapons can doubt on which side will be the advantage. If the lance point does not reach the man, it will certainly not miss the horse, and the ghastly stab will in either case dispose of one enemy as an efficient combatant. If a sword is used for cutting, it is not by any means certain that a true cut with the edge will be made, as the sword is very apt to turn slightly in a man's hand, and so deliver its blow more or less with the flat of the blade. If, however, the cut does fall true, its effect may very likely be modified by the edge coming upon a button, a belt, or some other piece of accoutrement, which will rob it of more than half its vigour, and the result is, at most, a slight flesh wound. If a sword is used for thrusting, it certainly becomes fifty times more to be feared; but then, again, it is at a disadvantage with the lance on account of the much longer reach of the latter. If a man lies down, or can profit by the smallest obstacle, he is almost perfectly safe from a swordsman, but he cannot so evade a lance point. In raids against lines of communication, which are marked out as services peculiarly to be hoped for from cavalry in the future, convoys will be very desirable objects of attack, and if they cannot be captured and removed, their further progress must be made impossible. Can swordsmen do this? No; for escort and drivers will seek shelter under waggons and behind beasts,

where they will be in perfect safety. But God help them in such a case, if they are attacked by lancers! In the Mutiny campaign it was often the practice of individuals among the enemy, when they were being pursued, to lie down and pretend to be dead, rising up and firing, often with effect, at the horsemen after they had passed by. Our lancers, however, soon learned this ruse, and secured themselves by a simple precaution. If one of them saw a prostrate body, he dropped the butt of his lance upon it *en passant*. If the body was really that of a dead man, there was no time lost, and it was shown that no shot from behind was to be feared. If it was that of a shamming enemy, the blow from the butt was generally sufficient to put him off his shooting; but if not, the lance could be reversed, and he received his quietus from the point. So completely, indeed, was the lance to be relied on in every contingency that, during the Mutiny campaign, the officers of our lancer regiments themselves carried lances, or sometimes the lighter and even more deadly boar-spears. How deadly they were is shown by the prowess of an officer of the 9th Lancers, of whom it is recorded that, in one action, he killed eleven of the enemy, and among them a man who was on the point of slaying an English officer.

A lance cannot so easily become blunted as a sword. Even if the extreme keenness of the point is lost, there are very few substances that can resist its

penetration when it has the weight of man and horse behind it. The iron-shod butt also, which is never sharpened, is nearly as formidable as the point, and in the hands of an expert will inflict a terrible and shattering wound.

Finally, it is no small thing to be able to say, in the lance's favour as compared with the sword, that if necessary a well-trained lancer can use a sword, especially if he depends upon the point, with ease and good effect, while the same certainly cannot be said of a swordsman, if a lance is put into his hand.

Now let the *per contra* be examined. What are the faults of the lance? A great deal has been made of its conspicuousness, in the spirit of that criticism attributed in the 'Times,' April 7, 1900, to Colonel Albrecht, the German officer who did so much for the Boers. "You did conceal nothing. . . . But your cavalry! We can see. We see a bush with a pole sticking up behind it, and we say, There is the cavalry." Such a remark can very easily be answered. A lancer in the field would either have his lance "slung"—i.e., hanging by the sling from his arm, or else at the "trail"—i.e., laid across his horse's shoulder, and in either case the point would certainly not be higher than his own head. If, therefore, Colonel Albrecht or any one else saw a lance sticking up behind a bush, he must have been very blind not to see also the man who carried it. As a matter of fact, if the most moderate care

is taken, lancers are very little, if at all, more conspicuous than any other cavalry. It is to be remembered that in war, and especially in countries which are very open and where the atmosphere is clear, the gaudy fluttering pennons are removed: only the occasional twinkle of a lance point can attract attention by any possibility, and this, too, can very easily be guarded against by using a little oil to dull the steel.

By far the most important objection to the lance lies in its awkwardness when men are required for dismounted duty with their carbines, and here the sword the rather commends itself. The sword is always fastened to the saddle, where it hangs snugly and easily; there is no delay when the soldier wishes to leave his horse, and in leading the dismounted horses over rough ground or through woods, there is nothing that can impinge upon any obstacles. The lance is always and essentially part of the man while he is in the saddle; before he dismounts he must fasten it to his saddle, which takes a few moments of time, and lances which are attached to led horses are undoubtedly to be considered in deciding where these led horses are to go. But, even granting this objection, it is of very small real importance. A tolerably long and varied personal experience and the known judgment of many veterans of our modern wars, including the South African campaign, have taught the writer that smart,

active, and well-trained lancers can quit their saddles, have their horses taken to a place of shelter, and be themselves ready for dismounted service with their rifles as quickly within a moment or two as any other mounted troops; and even that moment or two might be saved by some small improvement in the saddlery. And here it may be remarked parenthetically that operations of war are not necessarily conducted, as some theorists seem to think, at the speed of sleight-of-hand tricks, but, more often than not, are sufficiently leisurely and deliberate to allow a considerable margin of time for preparation.

Remains, then, the objection that, if a lance is to be used effectively it must be in the hands of a reasonably tall, well-grown, and well-developed man, and this especially as coupled with the popular belief that, for the sake of reducing the weight on the horse's back, our cavalry soldiers of the future must be short and in every way undersized. The question of the physique that we should seek for in our cavalry recruits was pretty carefully examined in a paper on "The Future of our Cavalry," which appeared in 'Maga' in May 1901, and some of the words then written may be now transcribed, for they seem to answer the objection with some completeness:—

"Practical experience teaches us that, if men are powerful and in good condition, there is not above a very few pounds difference between the weight of an individual who is 5 feet 5 inches and one who is 5 feet

7 inches or 5 feet 8 inches, and it may be accepted as a general rule that the better the class from which a man comes the taller he will be. . . . It is a scientific fact that typical Englishmen of the upper classes are, at twenty years old, from 5 feet 8 inches to 5 feet 9 inches in height, and of a lower class about 5 feet 7 inches. Two or three years later, under favourable conditions, both classes of men are about the same height. Men who are shorter than the typical height are generally so because they have been born under unhealthy circumstances, because at some time in early life they have suffered from disease, or because they have had bad or insufficient food. In any case these causes of arrest of growth take away greatly from an individual's physical value when he arrives at maturity. . . . It has often been said that we should enlist for our cavalry men like jockeys, second horsemen, or whippers-in; but there is not a sufficient supply of well-nourished muscular pigmies, and men of the classes we have named, however strong they may be in their bodies, generally have, to an experienced medical eye, some defect about the legs. Now a man who is in any way weak or deficient is, more than ever in present circumstances, undesirable as a cavalry soldier."

Every man who has done any soldiering with mounted troops in the field knows well that a fairly tall, spare, lathy man in the saddle, even though he may weigh a few pounds more, distresses his horse much less than a "dumpy," and, in camp or bivouac, he is certainly better able to tend it and make it comfortable. Let the weight on the horse's back be reduced in every possible way, except by recruiting men who, whether we make lancers of them or not, are below the mean standard of our national physique.

The lance may now be left and the sword may come up for

examination. In the comparison of the two weapons, for the sake of defending the former, some hard truths have been said, which lovers of the "queen of weapons" have generally been very loath to insist upon, as not wishing to depreciate the confidence of their comrades who are armed with swords. But, though it cannot be admitted that the sword is other than inferior to the lance in many respects, it is yet a time-honoured weapon which has carved a way to glory on every battlefield since the world began, which has its own peculiar merits, and is well suited to the wants of a large proportion of our mounted soldiers. It should by all means be retained by all the regiments of our cavalry in which it has hitherto had its special home, and for the use of which it is perfectly adapted. But if any of our soldiers are to be called upon to place reliance on their swords, the pattern of the weapon itself, as now supplied to our army, must be altogether and at once remodelled, and it is somewhat curious that, in the present epoch of change, it has not been the first item selected for condemnation. Let any man take an ordinary cavalry sabre in his hand and think how long he could possibly wield it in a *mêlée*. Many people have practised fencing more or less, and know how, after a bout of two or three minutes, using even a light foil, their arms and wrists are fatigued to exhaustion. What would be the result of a life-and-death struggle with a regulation

sword? Heavy, ill-balanced, with a massive steel hilt, it is the most impossible weapon that can be conceived—bad to cut with, bad for delivering a thrust, and ill adapted for parrying. The cavalry swords of the Waterloo period were infinitely superior. They at least were much lighter, and were so made that for cutting purposes (though, as will be seen, cutting is to be deprecated as a main feature of cavalry swordsmanship) nothing could be better. It may be told that when a renowned leader of irregular cavalry was organising and equipping for the Mutiny campaign the gallant regiment that followed him so faithfully, he considered himself fortunate in being able to find in some storehouse a sufficient number of old-pattern cavalry swords, which had been cast from the service long years before. When the old blades, that had been mouldering half-forgotten in obscurity, were furbished up, they were everything that could be desired, and in the nervous hands of the warrior Sikhs and their officers they bit deep in many a hard-fought encounter. And to add to their other demerits, our swords are carried in heavy steel scabbards, which most effectually prevent them from preserving a keen edge or a sharp point, whose clank betrays the presence of cavalry at an indefinite distance, and whose shimmer in the sun's rays it is almost impossible to conceal. For fifty years and more all thinking and practical cavalry soldiers have denounced metal scabbards in the strongest

terms, but they have maintained their place in our equipment, triumphant against common-sense. It is understood that now, however, experiments with wooden scabbards are being made, and we may hope that the final condemnation of steel scabbards is within measurable distance.

The question what would be the best form of sword for our cavalry is so intimately bound up with that of the most effective way of using the weapon that the form of sword instruction now given to our cavalry must claim some attention. And this unquestionably seems to be open to serious criticism. In it, as it appears to most people who have practically studied swordsmanship, the emphasis laid on the use of the sword's edge is far too great, and the use of the point is not made of sufficient comparative importance. Both in the sword exercise—i.e., the drill in making cuts, guards, and points as taught on foot and mounted in the barrack-yard—and also in the exercises at a gallop, when the soldier is required to use his weapon on various objects presented to him in his career, the cuts have an undue share of regard. The natural tendency of all men (and perhaps more especially of Englishmen) is to cut rather than to thrust, but from every point of view this must be wrong. The man who cuts fatigues himself in a *mêlée* far more than the man who thrusts, and, as a rule, expends his strength to very little purpose. It has been pointed out above, in comparing the lance with the sword,

how many chances there are against a cut falling with a true edge and on a quite undefended spot. Then the man who cuts opens his guard and is at a disadvantage with a wary adversary who is ready to profit by the momentary opportunity. The man, on the other hand, who is taught mainly to depend upon his point, remains quietly on guard with his point low, is always ready with his parry, and, when he thrusts, does so with the minimum of exertion, for the weight of his body and his horse is behind his sword, and he is barely called upon to extend his arm. Then in the thrust, even if the point of the sword does come upon any more or less impervious part of accoutrement, it does not necessarily fail altogether, for it will probably only slip on to a more vulnerable spot; and that the wound given by the point of the sword is certainly as a rule much more disabling than one given by the edge, and that thrusting is therefore the swordsman's most effective action, has been proved in battle over and over again. It is a long way to go back to the Roman legionaries, though the *arme blanche* knows no special dates, but it may be remembered that their short swords were ever used for thrusting. De Brack may fairly be cited, however, and he knew something in his day of cavalry hand-to-hand encounters. He says, "Pointez, pointez, le plus que vous pourrez! Vous jetterez par terre tous ceux que vous toucherez; vous démoral-

iserez l'ennemi échappé à vos coups, et ajouterez à ces avantages celui de ne point vous découvrir et d'être toujours à la parade." Napoleon's cuirassiers, the *gros frères* of French military romance and legend, were armed with long straight swords, and, always using the point, their course over a battlefield was marked by swathes of dead and disabled enemies, and so great was the moral effect produced by the devastation they always caused, that most Continental cavalry were very loath to meet them. The story told somewhere illustrating the moral effect of their prowess may here be repeated, to show how formidable their mode of fighting was estimated. A small body of cuirassiers, cloaked, met a very greatly superior force of Austrian cavalry, which advanced to the attack full of confidence. The cuirassiers drew swords, and, in doing so, their cloaks swung aside, disclosing the cuirasses beneath. The Austrians at once thought better of their purpose, and fell back rather than meet the much-dreaded warriors, conflict with whom was very different in its results from that with ordinary cavalry.

There can be no doubt that one of the most crying present needs of our cavalry is a really good and effective sword, much lighter, or at any rate better balanced, than the present weapon, in which, without doing away altogether with the edge, greater importance shall be given to the point, both in the length, width, and

straightness of the blade ; and when such a sword has been devised, which should not be difficult with the guidance of the numberless models of all the centuries which we have at our disposal, then our present method of teaching the use of the weapon should be changed for one more in keeping with its best potentialities.

Before passing to the consideration of the carbine, an idea must be noticed which has been several times mooted in the past, and has now, it is understood, been practically carried out by one of the most distinguished leaders of mounted troops in South Africa, who has placed his experimental results in the hands of the military authorities for consideration. He proposes that our cavalry soldiers should be provided with swords of such a description that they can be fitted like bayonets on to the muzzles of the carbines. With a sword-bayonet thus fixed it is believed that a composite weapon will be formed which can be used like a lance when the soldier is mounted, and will also have a certain value on foot. Writing without any personal knowledge of the sword-bayonet in question, which has yet been seen only by few outside of an inner circle, it is of course impossible to speak with absolute certainty about it. This, however, may probably be said with perfect truth—(1) That any sword capable of being used as a bayonet must inevitably be too short for useful employment by itself as a sword, either

mounted or dismounted. (2) A rifle with a bayonet fixed on it will, in no sense, be of the same value as a lance, because it cannot have a proper balance ; it will be of little or no use for parrying the attack of any enemy except in the hands of an extraordinarily powerful man ; and it will lack the armed butt which forms a most important part of a lance's power. (3) It will be that which is never really successful, a compromise, which itself can never give to cavalry its proper value at any time or under any circumstances, and may therefore, if our cavalry is so armed, place our soldiers in a very false position should they ever be called upon to meet well-trained and equipped horsemen of any European army.

At best it appears that the proposed arrangement is only adapted for the use of a sentry, to whom it is sometimes of advantage to have it in his power to stop a man without being obliged to fire ; and possibly it might have some value in a campaign against a half-savage foe, who could bring no parallel weapons against it. If it is contemplated that the sword-bayonet is to accompany the cavalry soldier when he dismounts, and is to be used systematically on foot, it must be taken into consideration that it and its scabbard will be an encumbrance to free movement as compared to the present conception of the cavalry sword, which is left always fastened to the saddle. Of course, however, if cavalry is really to be turned into a kind of mounted

infantry, there is no more to be said.

Whatever line our military authorities may eventually take with regard to the arming of our mounted troops, it is sincerely hoped by most soldiers, and certainly by most cavalry soldiers, that they may stick to some definite principle. Let weapons be recognised which can be used on foot, and others which can be used in the saddle, but nothing is to be gained by an attempt to combine the two. The rifle is all that is wanted on foot, and the sword (though we may have our own views about the lance) is a most excellent weapon when mounted; but the hybrid between the rifle and the sword in the hands of a horseman would be a laughing-stock if opposed to either a lancer or a swordsman.

There is little space left in which to say anything about the carbine, but fortunately the knowledge of the rifle's qualities is very widespread, and most people can form an exceedingly sound opinion about it for themselves. With regard to its use by cavalry, however, one most important principle must be reiterated, and this is that we must put aside once for all the old-fashioned belief that the same man cannot fight equally well mounted and dismounted. Some of our foremost soldiers are still unconvinced of this truth, but there can be no doubt about it. It is quite possible for a man to be most formidable with a rifle on foot, and equally formidable, in another sense, when he finds

himself in the saddle grasping sword or lance. The rôles in combat of cavalry and infantry do not necessarily involve two different qualities of the mind; and soldiers, being reasonable men, can see perfectly well when one form of action is suited to an occasion rather than another. Many renowned generals have been equally distinguished both in leading cavalry and infantry, and why should not the rank and file be equally ready to act either on foot or on horseback as the necessity of the case demands? In a small way the truth of this was quite sufficiently proved at Diamond Hill, when the Household Cavalry and the handful of the 12th Lancers each charged with the greatest delight and with perfect confidence, though for long months previously they had never been engaged except on foot with their carbines; and at Omdurman, where the 21st Lancers, after charging, dismounted and fired coolly and effectively with their carbines.

As a matter of fact, we may fairly thus reckon up the probabilities of cavalry action in the future. Nine times out of ten, when they are engaged, they will find that their rifles will be their stand-by. They will be holding outlying positions, they will be harassing an enemy, they will be covering a movement, they may be employed on any one of fifty possible minor operations. On the tenth, however, their real chance will come, and, if they are equal to the occasion, they may strike such a blow as impetuous horse-

men as will re-echo in history throughout the ages. They must—and indeed the English cavalry will, if the chance be given to it—be equal to the occasion.

A word must be said of the future firearm of our cavalry. It is understood that it has been decided that cavalry and infantry are both to have the same rifle. It is to be about four inches longer than the present carbine, and will therefore be somewhat shorter than the present infantry musket. It may be that, in giving to cavalry a rifle with the longest possible range, we are going too much on the experiences of South Africa, a land of vast distances and a singularly clear atmosphere. In almost any other country in the world, a clear range of 1000 to 1200 yards, the effective range of the present carbine, is almost an impossibility; and even if it was found, the atmosphere is seldom anywhere so clear that objects at such a distance are sufficiently distinguishable for very effective fire - action, particularly such as would be expected from cavalry, which would almost certainly be acting in comparatively small bodies. It is, however, well to be prepared for any emergency, and though the new rifle can no longer be called a carbine, and will be more of an encumbrance to a man when he is mounted than the older weapon, it must be welcomed for the sake of its possible advantages.

There is an opinion, perhaps rather generally entertained,

that cavalry soldiers cling too obstinately to old traditions, and that they are too little ready to recognise new developments in the art of war, but this opinion has certainly no real foundation in fact. Cavalry soldiers have studied the history of the past and the experience of the present quite as closely as any other military theorists. They are supported in their belief that the old cavalry methods are not yet entirely out of date, not only by many thinking men belonging to all arms of the British army, but by the consensus of thought of all the great military nations of the Continent. They are quite ready to accept, and not only to accept but to welcome, all the new duties which modern circumstances may put upon them, but they cannot, as yet, believe that the power of the well-armed, well-trained horseman has, as such, passed away for ever. They implore, therefore, that their armament may be suited to what they most conscientiously believe to be their requirements.

Whatever may be the equipment which is finally given to them by authority, they will make the best of it and thoroughly do their duty. The peace of Europe is none too secure, and if our cavalry are called upon to take part in a really great struggle, they only pray that they may in the future be able to meet any possible enemy so armed, that they may maintain the honour and safety of England as well and honourably as their forefathers have done in the past.

THE PRIVATEERS.

1540-80.

KING HARRY ordained him many a vessel,
 Pinnaces tall and brave,
 Meet with pirate or Pope to wrestle
 For the sway of the plunging wave:
 They strained at their leash to southward,
 With vigilant eyes and ears,—
 They swept full cry 'neath an echoing sky
 On the scent of the privateers.

But now those ships so gallantly builded
 Rot in the harbour slime:
 Sternpost carven and hatchboard gilded,
 They are mantled with rust and grime:
 While the ravening wolves of the Channel
 Scuttle and burn and slay,
 And prowl in hosts on our naked coasts,
 Licking their lips for prey.

Out of the havens of France and Flanders
 They loose their venomous horde,—
 Light-heeled craft with savage commanders,
 Reeking of fire and sword:
 The merchants of London city
 Go pallid and worn with fears,
 And the trader flees on the narrow seas
 From the clutch of the privateers.

.
 The Western women they run for the whiting,
 They handle the net and sail,
 For the men of the West fare forth to fighting,
 Hot on the Spaniards' trail:
 Sons of the spume and spindrift,
 Mariners fierce and free,
 Shall they brook one hour that would baulk their power
 As true-born heirs of the sea?

"Sloop and brigantine, smack and schooner,
Hurl them forth on the foam!
Seize the vermin, or sink them sooner,
Under the cliffs of home!
We will thrust them back from our threshold,
Monsieurs or Dons or Mynheers,—
Letters of marque and a valorous barque
For the Devonshire privateers!"

He that in port for wine or wenches
Tarries to ruffle and revel,
While his kith are chained to the galley-benches,
And his kin at the stakes of Seville,—
May the very devil renounce him,
May the deeps of the Pit deride!—
But there's none will lag when the red-cross flag
Shall beckon him down the tide.

Strangways, Killegrews, Careys, Horseys,
Each with his eager crew,
Aflame for battle,—the stars in their courses
Strike and flame with them too;—
Red Tremayne 'mid his rovers,
At Champernowne's side he steers,—
And "Fie!" saith the Queen,—but with smile unseen
She whistles her privateers.

Daring all desperate hazard and jeopard
To race on a sleuth-hound track,
To swoop as a hawk, or lurk as a leopard,
They waylay, challenge, attack:
Their scouts are swift in the offing,
Unslacking for mists or gales,
Lest a shadowy shape through the night escape
While they strip to their fighting sails.

Shot through and through between wind and water,
They grapple the galliots proud:
In a roaring mellay of capture and slaughter,
Their trumpets and drums are loud,—

Till the yellow banner abases,
To the volley of English cheers,—
Till the Don's aboard to render his sword
The prize of the privateers!

.

In the crash and thunder of Armageddon,
When the battle is long and late,
When the helmsmen reel and the scuppers redden,
As we clinch with our final fate,—
They shall flash o'er the swirling surges,
New-born from the ancient war,—
Where the smoke-drifts creep, where the searchlights
leap,
They shall crowd on their quest once more.

"Your warships drift, and your crews diminish,
Your guns are famished and dumb;
But hither, for this is a fight to the finish,
The sons of our sires, we come:
With all that a man need covet,
Reckless of failures or fears,—
With letters of marque and mariners stark
And the luck of the privateers!"

MAY BYRON.

COSAS DE ESPAÑA.—II.

BY A LATE RESIDENT IN SPAIN.

EDUCATION in Spain implies manners, and the more you have of them the better. The Englishman—my friend next door, for example—struts on to the tennis-ground with a Britannia would-never-trouble-to-rule-such-waves-as-these demeanour. He tilts his straw hat a little farther off his forehead, and after a vague wave of his tennis-bat by way of recognition towards the group of ladies under the eucalyptus-tree, he proceeds to do what he has come for, to play a game. That won't do here. The well-bred Spanish gentleman comes on to the ground with the self-confident and proud demeanour of an *espada* heading his *cuadrilla* in the bullring. His tennis-bat hangs down from his hands, held behind him, like a tail. Arrived at the centre of the ground, he gives a little start of pleasure and surprise at the sight of the dainty group of ladies already assembled. He furtively lets the bat drop on the ground, where it remains. He wishes to convey to those who are watching (he hopes) his every movement, that his real object in coming this afternoon is not to play an absurd game of "balls," but to pay his respects to the ladies. He advances towards the latter with the air of one who is sure of a welcome,—not toe-tilting like a Frenchman, or with his hands in his

pockets like an Englishman, but with his hat pressed against his bosom with one hand, or, better still, with two hands, like a votary about to make offering on a shrine. Arrived at the eucalyptus-tree, he halts, squares his shoulders, closes his heels, and with a low bow to the "rankest" lady of his acquaintance, inquires in tones of acute sympathy not only as to her own health but the health of her parents, progeny, and relations generally to the third and fourth generation, in whom he is bound as a gentleman to take the deepest personal interest. Meanwhile the Englishman has been annexed by three others for a game of "pelotas," and is astonishing them with the strokes that once made Wimbledon cheer.

But, my friend, when a newcomer strolls across the court to exchange greetings with one of your opponents just as you are about to serve, do not remark in your vulgar city way, "This isn't biz." Your partner will not understand, and will resent your surliness by herself beginning a chat with the opponent over the net, just when she ought to be making one of those wild attempts at a half-volley on the back line. After all, it is only a game, is her unanswerable criticism. The conversation of the game is to her far more important

than the game itself. The game is not the end but the means. These are her halcyon days. A few years later, when your sister, who will be twenty-eight, would be indignant if any one hints that she will not be a young lady for another ten years, your little partner will, if not married, have taken religious vows or at least be doomed to a life of good works, implied by the incessant decking the shrine of an unsympathetic saint. Be kind to her, therefore, and, above all, talk to her, in spite of the nervous effort it may cost you as an Englishman to make conversation. And worthy is she to be talked to. She is almost sure to be pretty and daintily dressed, and will have that charm so especially attractive to an Englishman, the charm of neatness,—a word that cannot, I think, be really expressed in any language but our own. Anyhow, much better than showing off that Oxford "slice" of yours will it be to stand spellbound and watch her tiny feet twinkle as she dashes after the ball, half hoping she will fail, so that you may see the white teeth glisten as she smiles at her want of skill. If you are lucky, one day you may see in the drawing-room of a friend those same feet twinkling in a national dance as she stands up with her sister to dance the fandango by general desire. Then, as she dances quickly, very quickly, but lightly, to one of those maddening Spanish airs, the music seems not only in her feet but in the folds of her dainty

gown, her wrists that shake the castanets, and the elf-locks that fringe her neck. Her gown falls in simple straight folds to the ground. It does not sway or swirl, but yet seems a-tremble with melody; and as you watch this modest enchanting poem in movement, you blush as you think of a long-legged, barefaced horror they talk of at home as a skirt dance.

Therefore cultivate the gentle art of conversation, and try and get a little "south" in these British airs of yours.

There is plenty of very pleasant social life here, and Society will like you if you like Society. But you must not go into Society in the sordid spirit of a well-known member of London Society who boasted in my presence that he always made a great economy in dining during the London season by having afternoon tea at his club and arriving at a ball just in time for supper. Still less must he expect the hospitality of Ireland, where a hostess is sometimes known to press a pint of champagne into the hands of each departing guest. He will be more likely to share the fate predicted to me by my friend next door when he was persuading me to forgo an evening party in the country, in order that I might play a game of billiards with himself.

A party in the country may last some hours, perhaps from sunset to early dawn. The company is divided into the sheep and the goats, the goats being the married people —

"Donati jam rude," as Juvenal would say. You descend among the sheep and choose (I prefer the active voice) your lamb for the evening.

Your conversation will be all about beauty's eyes. It need not vary, only you must not get tired. You may wander with your partner among the flowering glades, and even propose a walk on the fresh-looking turf. Your partner pulls you back in horror. It is not turf at all, but a low-growing form of cactus, full of creeping things innumerable. Turf will not grow in those parts; it either dies or grows yellow, and thus half the charm of a landscape-garden is impossible.

About midnight a cry is borne upon the balmy air that sounds like supper. You heard, or thought you heard, the word "sandwich,"—an English and an appetising sound,—and both of you rise and plunge without a word in the direction from which the sound proceeds: alas! it is a sandwich such as dreams are made of—it signifies nothing. You mingle with an excited crowd. Then if you have closely studied Vauban's system, and have brilliant ideas of your own on cavalry skirmishes and hand-to-hand encounters, you may possibly succeed in getting a cup of chocolate and a wafer-biscuit, which you place humbly at beauty's feet. You yourself will have to feast on beauty's eyes, and, thus fortified, will be prepared to face the ordeal of the mountain walk which some blithe spirit has just proposed.

You start perhaps at one

o'clock A.M.—say, 200 of you—and for more than a mile the rugged mountain path is strewn with the curses of souls in pain and little pieces of evening shoes. Then perhaps a bonfire is made, and if you have a spark of youth and manhood left in you, you will be expected to leap backwards and forwards through the flames. Remember the more your dress-coat is singed the more amusement will be reflected in beauty's eyes. When the hour of departure at length arrives, your face is lit up with such an intoxicating joy that even your hosts half believe in the profuse thanks you give them for their delightful entertainment.

If manners form the chief ingredient in the education of a Spanish lady, it must be confessed that more prosaic items, generally connected with education, are sometimes ignored. A well-dressed, apparently well-to-do, lady came into the consulate one morning to sign her name to a paper. The paper was put before her and the place for signature pointed out: she hesitated, and then brought out a roll of paper with her name written in large round hand, from which she laboriously copied on to the document that required her signature. "You see I am not accustomed to write," she said, with the utmost nonchalance.

A lady moving in society spoke of going to London or England, thinking they were two large countries; and another spoke of Marseilles or London,—she did not know

which, but anyway it was the capital of England.

These are errors which any school inspector in England can match by scores, and even my own soldier servant (a travelled warrior too) thought Italy was one of the Channel Islands, and though he did not quite know where Paris was, knew it was somewhere in London.

But what is one to say of newspapers speaking of Afghanistan with Oceania in brackets? and surely such a jumble of errors has never been made by a newspaper of reputation as one I copied from the 'Resumen': "With a view to annoying Great Britain, the United States are about to acquire territorial possessions in Africa, in the region of Siberia."

After this, the explanation by a masher who had travelled in England, of the mystery of a Shrewsbury-Talbot cab, seems quite harmless. "Shrewsbury was a lord," I heard him say, "and Talbot was his cook. Shrewsbury had a title, and Talbot had money, so they set up a partnership to run cabs. Talbot's real name was Botel, but he spelt it backwards because it sounded more aristocratic."

Those who would take a less jaundiced view of Society than may be obtained from the account of the party given above should visit the scene of revel by daylight. They will find a perfectly enchanting Southern paradise. On a sunny slope, cultivated with the minutest care, and luxuriant with the flowers and shrubs that only a

sub-tropical climate can produce, rises marble terrace above marble terrace, culminating in a villa that a Grand Duke at Cannes might envy. As he admires the marble columns, the spacious saloon, and the modern comfort and appliances, all in perfect keeping, the visitor will be glad of an opportunity of observing the taste, culture, and luxury with which even in these degenerate days a Spanish gentleman can surround himself. But there are many who think that in a decadent nation the peasantry are the only people whose society is worth cultivating. Quite so, but your Oxford socialistic theories (one remembers your speech at the Union) must expect a little shock when you find your gardener's arm placed in a friendly way round your waist as he makes depreciating remarks on your way of treating pot-plants. The waiter, too, at the café is really most kind in offering you assistance in finding an abode; but the next day, when he is off duty and he returns to his lair, it is a little trying when he comes and sits by you and puffs his cigar into your soup, and you could hear much better what he said if he would remove either his cigar or the toothpick from his mouth while speaking. You are even a little shocked when the club waiter leans against the door-post while you struggle ineffectually with your greatcoat; and a little more when, having missed your walking-stick, you find the page-boy balancing it upon his finger, roaring with delight at

the success of his experiment. As you leave the club and say good night to the waiter, who answers with a surly nod without removing his cigarette, you feel far—so very far—from Pall Mall, where the club waiter seems to take it as a personal favour if you order a postage-stamp, and thanks you when he brings your change.

But it is time you had some abode of your own, if you have any idea of making a long stay in Spain, or how will you be able to reciprocate the generous but somewhat empty compliment of every polite Spaniard who offers you his house and everything that belongs to him, and expects you to do the same? Your choice of abode is not limited. There is, of course, the hotel, where you can stay for a few days, and find not inferior to the usual provincial hotel, especially as regards prices. As to the family 'ouse, you weathered it once when you were learning French in Paris; but those days are happily over. One's friends in England always say it is so nice being on the Continent, as you can live so luxuriously in a pension on four francs a-day.

I will inspect one. I went up two flights of stairs of white and glistening marble. At the top stood a waiter glistening, but not so white as the stone. "Without any fee I will show you, your Excellency, the guests actually at lunch." The door opens, there is a long table. Four-and-twenty guests stare open-mouthed at the stranger. Only for a moment, however, for

into the four-and-twenty mouths pop four-and-twenty knives and forks. It is enough. I beckoned to the waiter; but the half of him has disappeared into a cupboard, whence he emerges with a piece of cheese in his hand, which he offers to a guest in his fingers. It is too much. I lead him gently but firmly to the door, where he shakes me cordially by the hand without any show of resentment or condescension. Café life is not much better: the constant crowd of children waiting to snatch your one piece of bread makes your meal too lively, and even the query of the friendly waiter as to why you like wickey (so it is written) better than Val de Peñas becomes monotonous. No; better than this a broken-down shanty on the sunny mole facing the glorious sea, though my friend next door says it must tumble down in six months from sheer old age. His remark that his black clerk has been long negotiating for its possession decides me. I install myself with Juana as cook, and troubles begin. Unauthorised visitors enter during the night. I complain to my friend next door. No pity. "When you have been in Spain some time," he says, "you will learn to take off your hat when you meet a flea, and thank him for not being a bug." Juana has her grievance; she is being disturbed by rats, and she is afraid of rats. I could have embraced her for this feminine weakness, so desirable in a cook. Of course she can use the dining-room as her sleeping-apartment. The white-washed

salon above will serve me quite well for dining- and sitting-room, while she can forget the rats on the ground-floor and overawe the beggars through the iron bars. In truth the beggars want a master-hand to manage them. Juana, as I am told all domestics do, secretly encourages them and gives them alms.

A word as to beggars in Spain. I must confess they are worthy of all the abuse that has been heaped upon them. I dislike them for their dirt, their ubiquity, and pertinacity; but I dislike them most for the Murillo-like attitudes they assume in ancient sculptured archways with a view to worming sympathy and alms out of you by the exquisite picturesqueness of their coloured rags. They are not grateful either, except in giving you a blank cheque on Heaven's generosity, and they are no respecters of persons.

I was returning to my shanty with my friend next door one day, and as we turned the corner we saw Juana brandishing a carrot, evidently having words with Elvira, the cook next door. "What can Juana have to say against you?" I say to my friend. "Oh, it is not me she hates, it is my black clerk because of his sham rings; she told Elvira so." "I don't believe there is such a person as your black clerk; you always talk of him, but seldom see him." "You are lucky," is the only reply I get. As we neared the house a great excitement was manifest. Juana was menacing everybody with the

carrot. Doña Julia moaned and wrung her hands against the lintel of the door, while a crowd of beggars, who evidently thought themselves at home, were trying to scribble some writing against the lower portion of the wall and door-post. I was interested: I had succoured these mendicants; they had used my porch as a resting-house for their feet, they had eaten vegetables for which I had no further use. How interesting! What would the poor things say of me? I pushed forward to the door and examined the phylactery. My friend next door glibly translated, "Here lives a pig,"—rather too glibly, I thought.

Sometimes one manages to get a little amusement out of these beggars. The river-bed of the Guadalmedina is spanned by a narrow bridge. It is a little way from the noises of the town, and on summer evenings the breeze blows cool from the mountains. I was loitering there one evening, and found myself quite alone save for the presence of two elderly mendicants, and stopped to listen to their ceaseless chatter. They were evidently connected by some sort of matrimonial tie, but professionally they seemed the bitterest of rivals. The two kept up a duet of unceasing gabble, which rose and fell as the sound of footsteps came and went. They were unaware of my presence, and I was interested to see what their harvest would be. There came along a stout well-to-do citizen from the town. He stopped before the male beggar, fumbled

in his pockets, and asked for change for a halfpenny. He received five pieces of one centime each, of which he dropped two into the hat of the beggar. The dole amounted to less than a farthing. The unexpected generosity roused this beggar to enthusiasm. He took off his hat and burst into a perfect pæan of thanksgiving, which he kept up long after his benefactor's steps had died away in the distance. As the citizen passed the old woman her moan of entreaty was so piteous at the evident good fortune of her husband and rival, that the benefactor dropped yet another centime-piece into her hand. Whereupon she swelled the chorus of praise, which was only broken by anxious inquiries as to how much the other had got,—inquiries only answered with a taunt and fresh outburst of praise, intending to imply that it was he who was the more successful operator of the two. Then footsteps were heard, and the old song of misery began again. During the quarter of an hour I calculated they must have made nearly a whole halfpenny. No, it is of no use abusing beggars in Spain. They are there like bulls, and likely to remain. You can overwhelm them with abuse, call them fancy names—"slabber de gullion druggels and noddy meacocks," &c. They have not read Rabelais, and will not understand you. And just look at that woman resting on the broken grey doorstep of the convent. Her thin body is covered with rags,

wondrous green that no modern artist would attempt to reproduce. You must give a copper for the sake of an atom that somebody seems to have thrown upon her lap. Is it a child? It hardly moves; it is not clothed, but it is swathed in a rag of heliotrope tint that would only come from long exposure to wind, sun, and rain.

As you turn away, a rag-muffin miniature St John pokes his tangled head over his mother's shoulder and wrings from you another copper instead of an oath, for the sake of the wondrous darkness of his eyes and the orange kerchief that decks his sunburnt throat.

Only Spain can produce such pictures, only John Phillip can paint them. The beggars' bridge, as I called it, should be visited by daylight. It is impossible to imagine anything more brilliant and picturesque than this scene in the river-bed. Where are the painters? The tawny river-bed, bordered by grey-green trees, stretches a mile away to the foot of the mountains, soft blue and misty red, with touches of bright sunlight on the foremost crags. Above, a glorious sky, with perhaps a lazy floating cloud, and in the foreground a blaze of colour, stalls of pottery, lines of bright-coloured rags, fruit-stalls, fish, iron, corn, endless scraps of mauve and yellow, and innumerable tints of red. A crowd of dark-eyed girls, with their burning brows bound with gay handkerchiefs, soldiers, Moors, beggar-boys, the incessant hum of a soft

southern tongue and the glory of a southern sky. I say, Where are the painters? I will tell you where they are. They are in back-attics painting pictures of steamers, sometimes two or three in a row, which they sell by means of vagabond agents for a peseta each in the town. Such a one appeared at the office one day—"A marvellous picture to sell, the chance of a lifetime," he said. "Is it, then, a picture of the beggar-woman on the convent steps, or the oleander you saw this morning peeping over the amber wall?" "Stay, if it is a picture of the steamer that came into harbour last night, you do not require it." "It is none of these things, but it is a wonderful work of art." The speaker is an imposing sort of person, rather medieval in bearing, and such a cavalier as Don Quixote imagined that he represented. "Beautiful picture; but what is that mass of decaying vegetable that obscures one corner?" "That is the picture." "It is a railway tunnel, and there is the train going into it." "Wonderful! lifelike!" "Then that smudge in the other corner must be a railway accident." "Not at all, it is a procession of villagers to the shrine of Our Lady," and he crosses himself devoutly. "Only twenty-five dollars; it is given away." I thought of my whitewashed walls, and calculated how many of Juana's thumb-marks the picture would cover. "I will give you one dollar for that picture." Without deigning to reply, he shoulders his railway tunnel

like an arquebuse, and strides out of the room with a dash and a swagger, that you almost seem to hear the ring of hoofs upon the pavement, and the cry of "To horse! to horse!"

But I am forgetting my friends. After my installation Doña Julia presents her card and becomes a frequent visitor. The card bears the legend, "Doña Julia, teacher of English and seller of antiquities." She is one of those fragile gentle old women whom Miss Wilkin describes so delightfully in her *New England Stories*.

Pathetic, not from poverty that has pinched her lips and thinned her hair, but from the pride that makes her face the world with a placid brow, and look over the top of her sorrows with a smile. Yet they are not trivial sorrows either. The poor thing is neither wife nor widow, but separated from her husband. By a curious law in Spain a wife not legally separated has no claim to money. It all goes to the husband. To be legally separated she must prove herself unfaithful. "And how is that possible," says the old lady, "when I am the mother of his son, and every one will tell you Doña Julia is a lady?" In spite of her grievances she is always cheery, and there is one episode in her life that seems to give her fortitude to struggle on. It appears that when she was a child visiting Gibraltar she had the unprecedented honour of being presented to Queen Adelaide of England, and of actually being taken on the royal lady's knee. The curious chain of circum-

stances that brought the Mediterranean fortress, Doña Julia, and a Queen of England together would take too long to describe. The fact was the one bright spot in the old lady's gloomy past, her patent of nobility in the present, and the establishment of her right of entry into an Almanach de Gotha of her own imagination.

It must be added that Queen Adelaide's knee was apt to intrude itself into the conversation of Doña Julia, much in the same way that the head of Charles I. did into that of Mr Dick. Doña Julia always appears with a grey woollen shawl, which serves her for a bonnet and cape as well, from which garment her trembling fingers produce at intervals a fan. "Muy antiquo, muchos siglos" (very ancient, many centuries old), she says, presenting it for inspection. It was obviously born in Vienna and christened in Malaga last year; but to hint that it is modern and worthless would be to detract from the nobility of Doña Julia and almost to insult the dignity of Queen Adelaide's knee itself, so the fan has to be bought. It makes a bright spot of colour on the whitewashed wall, whitewash being the only safe decoration in these non-Burne-Jonesian climes. But Doña Julia has rivals in her own line. Concha was also a *vendedora*, or seller of antiquities, and gained admittance to my salon by a mistaken notion of Juana that I might like to buy a piece of magenta damask which Concha always wore on her arm as a sign of her trade,

which marked her coming a long way off. I shall never forget Doña Julia's look when her rival appeared. Nothing was said, but two warning fingers were held up in the direction of the magenta rag, as if an evil spirit was about to be cast out. Then in an undertone she rapidly explained the Jewish propensities of *vendedoras* (other than herself) in general and of Concha in particular. Concha caught fire at a word she overheard. I was afraid there was going to be a scene, and it required the dismissal of Concha and a timely reference to Queen Adelaide's knee to restore the usual tranquillity. Then Doña Julia, free from rivalry, produces her little bag of tricks, another fan, an Arab tile, a bull-fighter's photograph, and a knife such as every native carries to give point to his remarks. Some of these knives are quaint and picturesque, and make excellent paper-knives, but they are very apt to give a disembowelling turn to the conversation when folks get angry.

Among my friends I must mention three ladies to whom I never spoke, but who were among the most interesting acquaintances I made in Spain. My "shanty" looked out on the sea, and between the main road and the harbour there ran a low wall the whole length of the mole, which formed a pleasant seat for tired wayfarers, a dinner-table for workmen, and a resting-place for general public. When I looked out of my window in the morning I always remarked the presence of three women, apparently

no longer young, and dressed entirely in black, who occupied the same place on the wall, and sat quite close together, almost motionless, gazing over the sea. I never saw them come, and I never saw them go; but whenever I looked out of the window there they always were. I made inquiries about them, and found they were well known to everybody under the name of "the three Maries." No one knew their history, but every one knew that they spent the whole of the day on the wall, and at night retired to the Alameda, or public promenade, and spent the night on a seat—one watching while the other two slept, or, as some said, prayed. They were never seen to eat anything, and never known to buy anything, though one boy is said to have seen one of them at a grocer's bargaining for nuts. One day I begged Juana to take them some food; but she said it was useless, for Elvira next door had already pressed them to take shelter and food, but they had refused politely and firmly. I never really saw their faces. I passed behind them dozens of times, but never in front. I had an instinctive notion that they were in a state of exquisite nervousness, and the stare of a new face was agony to them. They sat almost motionless, except when one of the outer ones (they always occupied the same position) paid some little attention to the middle one by patting her on the shoulder or removing a speck of dust from her

gown. I watched them closely, but never saw them show any emotion but once. Some urohins had been making themselves particularly offensive by pointing and pushing quite close to them, and at last the boldest of them touched almost imperceptibly the edge of one of the ladies' shawls. The latter had her arm half raised, and for a moment I thought she was going to strike the child; but she let her hand fall in a listless way on her knee—not in anger, not even impatience, but with a motion that seemed a kind of protest. I could not help thinking of a frantic prisoner beating his iron bars and crying, "How long! how long!" The others were in instant sympathy with her. The middle one put forth her left hand and took the hand in hers that lay so placidly on the woman's knee, her right hand rested on the third woman's shoulder, and they all sat silent and trembling, looking as before across the sea, that mocked them with its innumerable dimples. I seemed to have been assisting at a little tragedy, sad, because there seemed some unfathomable mystery under it all.

There were many theories of what the secret was. Some said it was done for penance. Some said they were sent by the Propaganda at Rome to convert the heathen; and Bathos came along to say that they were spies of the police collecting information for the Government. No one really knew. My own theory

was that they were three young and beautiful princesses bound under the spell of an enchanter, and that some day, as they sat on the wall gazing over the harbour, a magic wave would arise from the tideless sea and ripple to their feet. Then they would resume their ancient form and live again in happiness the years of their youth the enchanter had stolen. It was said they were armed with daggers to protect them at night, but I am sure the whole manhood of the city would have risen to prevent any insult to the "three Maries." I wonder if they are there now?

If I was asked what was the crying evil of Spain that called for reform at the present day, I should answer without hesitation, "Noise." I omit the usual street noises, the workmen's carts, so constructed that they rattle by like a battery of artillery; I omit the curious construction of the houses, that enables every door and window to slam like a pistol-shot all through the night; I omit the beggars, quarrelling under every window as they gamble away the pence they have extorted during the day; I omit such things as vendors' cries, peripatetic dogs, screams of the steamers' whistles in the harbour, and the hammering of labourers in the dock,—but I would invent something peculiarly "boiling" for those utterly useless, weird, and penetrating sounds that could only have been invented for the torture of sensitive nerves. There is the *babuchos*

man, for instance. Why should the selling of some very inferior slippers involve a series of dismal howls that would be considered indecent at an Irish wake or a Mohammedan meeting in a cemetery to exorcise Sheitan? It is no use arguing with the man. One day I even showed him a row of my own slippers, explained I had plenty, and if not, I could not wear his, which were evidently designed only to mitigate the ravages on the croquet-lawn made by the patient animal that draws the roller. It is no use. "Baboo-oo-oo-chos!" he howls, and hobbles on.

Even Juana entered into the conspiracy of noise. I was awakened one night by the peculiar horror of the noise produced by what Americans call a rooster. I interviewed the culprit in the *patio* next morning. He was an evil-looking slum-born fowl, that looked defiance and asked no pity. It got none, for when I complained to Juana of what she called her bird's singing, she took a secret and subtle revenge. When I was out she slaughtered the creature in cold blood, and served him up for lunch as a spring chicken. Juana, by the bye, had her own remedy for sleeplessness. She called it *tila*. It was apparently a decoction of some herb quite harmless; but I had a better friend than *tila*. His name was Ollendorf, and he asked me such odd questions about the pencil of the gardener's wife and the mattresses of the sailors, that

in answering him, dear friend, I fell into the deepest sleep.

There is one noise yet that I must mention, if only in revenge for the many sleepless hours when I lay awake and called his name accursed. At about twelve o'clock P.M., when the southern night is at its loveliest and all nature should be a cradle for mankind, there arises a noise so ear-piercing, so nerve-destroying, that the cry of an amorous grimalkin, or of a milk-can on the riot, would be soothing lullaby in comparison. The noise continues at intervals of an hour till daylight. You are calmly told it is only the *sereno*—"the all-serene-oh," as the English call him. He is a little old man who is posted, along with others, in different parts of the city, to inform the public what sort of weather it is: it may be cloudy, rainy, or windy, he will let you know it; but as it is almost always *sereno*, the latter word is the burden of his song, hence his name. He produces the noise with a sort of penny-whistle, which emits two or three notes, as if he were trying to play a tune, then suddenly having come to the last of his few notes, he attempts the octave and fails dismally, the result being a screech as of a thousand files, that starts the sleeper out of his deepest sleep, and sets his teeth on edge till an hour later, when the torture is laid on again.

The lottery-ticket seller is also one of my enemies. He has had the misfortune to invent a chant by way of advertising his business, and he will

not buy any ticket unless the number rhymes with this horrible poem. The *pescadores* are tiresome in another way; they sell weird marine monsters that when you pinch them rise from their shells inviting you to eat them. I have forbidden these creatures admittance into the shanty, though Juana declares they make delicious soup. Yet Juana fled (I saw her) at the sight of a lobster, and calls shrimps by horrid names. Then there is a basket-woman. She is covered with baskets from head to foot, but she plants herself opposite my window and yells, "A basket I sell! I sell a basket." Raging, I count her cries thirty, forty, fifty times. I wonder if I rose and bought that basket, would the hag be still?

But no noise equals that of the *sereno* or watchman. Apart from the noise he made he was quite a respectable person: a bland and elderly individual by day, a malign fairy at the stroke of eleven changed him into a hideous nightmare. The nerves of the inhabitants must have been made of worsted and their brains of cotton-wool, or long ago they would have risen and suppressed the offender. Conceive my surprise when, at the end of a month, this Macbeth, this murderer of sleep, advanced smiling and requested money for his crime! But when he spoke of money, I knew that I held him in the hollow of my hand. I gave him a franc, and threatened that if he tortured me any more at night, not only would I kill him (and here the disembowelling expression came

in handy), but I would not pay the monthly and friendly dole of one franc which I now gave him. It was not without effect, for often after this, lying sleepless from other causes, I could hear, softened by distance, the echo of that deadly pipe, and knew that this Jack the Ripper of dreams was at his fiendish work. There was a story in Seville that a stranger lost his way in the narrow streets and suddenly was confronted by an escaped bull. With great presence of mind he flattened himself against the wall, and the bull, mistaking him for a *sereno*, passed him by untouched. Sometimes when I hear the deadly whistle afar, I think, now if it had really been a *sereno*, and if, if only, I had been the bull! The *sereno* whistle is not without its effect when malefactors are about. A woman one night screamed murder. All heads were instantly out of the windows. Several old men were seen advancing at a trot from their various posts, but their whistle thoroughly alarmed the culprit, who went home another way. Still they can do something when their blood is up. An old man confessed that once he actually had to draw his sabre on a thief, because he had abstracted a watch from a man with whom he (the watchman) was walking. The thief drew a penknife, and the old man retreated, brandishing his sabre, till they reached the sea, when the thief took a boat and went his way. The old man was left brandishing. It is only fair to

add that it is in Malaga alone that the *sereno* is accompanied by the whistle.

In Barcelona he wears a chain of door-keys, and sometimes is useful in opening the house door to a belated wanderer.

In Seville the fiend took another form. My bedroom was on the ground-floor, the night was hot, the window was left open. In the middle of my first sleep he put his head right into the room and bellowed his stupid remarks about the weather at the top of his voice. A winged *babucho* closed the conversation, and I heard no more; but the landlord put on a very long face the next day when he heard of the assault, and seemed to fear a visit from the police. In fact a *sereno*, like other official abuses, is very hard to move in a country where officialdom is surrounded by a triple wall of red-tape, obstinacy, and denseness, and he must take a long draught of faith and patience, and, moreover, put money in his purse, who would hope to get even a serious grievance redressed by official means. One night an English sailor lad on board a sailing-ship in Malaga harbour in going on deck stumbled over a piece of coal. He picked it up, and without thinking threw it overboard. Ten minutes later a party of brigands, calling themselves custom-house officers, boarded the ship, declared one of their number had been wounded by the piece of coal, and carried the sailor to prison. And there he remained month after month,

in spite of the protest and threats of the consul and appeals to Lord Salisbury. It was only when the authorities got too bored with the case to argue about it that he was let out. But they never attempted to try him, and he never obtained any redress. I went to see him in prison, and found him fairly comfortable. The prisoners have a good deal of liberty, and came forward in a body as I entered the prison. Indeed to some of them, no doubt, the cool dark prison must have seemed preferable to the glare of the sun outside and the eternal sound of labour at the mole. If their friends do not supply them with food they have to content themselves with prison fare, which an old inhabitant told me was prepared in the following way:—

"Take a large pail and fill it with water more or less clean; into it pour some rancid oil, the worst that can be procured; to this add some garlic and a handful of salt. Boil the whole, and when sufficiently (*sic*) prepared serve lukewarm." It is brought in by two men, and batches of from eight to ten stand round dipping long spoons into it. It is a means of inducing the stomach to receive an otherwise unnegotiable piece of black bread. I can almost believe the old inhabitant who told me this, when one day Juana recommended me some hot water with a little oil in it for a feeling of all-overishness. But the poor sailor lad mentioned above could thank himself that he

was English or he might be in prison now. Prisoners are known to be kept sometimes six years without trial. The unjust detention of innocent men is mitigated by a system which I cannot attempt to explain, but by which prisoners condemned to long terms of imprisonment manage to get out "somehow" after a short incarceration.

A lawyer at — sent two explosive missives: one failed and the second killed two people. He was sentenced for life, but was out "somehow" in four months, and is practising now in the very town where he was tried.

Civil guards have power to shoot prisoners. It is more than hinted that when the authorities wish to get rid of a prisoner the judge orders him to be marched to such and such a place, in the hope that he may try and escape and be shot down. So well is this known that the prisoners will ask to be chained, "so that I cannot escape."

Two men at Valencia in prison were playing at dominoes. A third approached with a large knife, and says to the player threateningly, "I want you outside." "When I have finished my game," replies he. They finish the game, and the others retire to bed, not willing to be present at what they know is going to happen, and without attempting to disarm the ruffian in spite of his ominous threats. The two then go out, and the domino-player is foully murdered in cold blood. He remarks before he dies, "It

is just as well; if he had not killed me I should have killed him." And that is all.

Of course we know on unimpeachable authority that in other countries besides Spain "the law is a hass!" but when stories such as the above are openly talked about and accepted as true, it surely shows that in Spain the "hass" wants attending to. And I suppose it is the uncertainty of what awaits a prisoner that makes crime so intensely interesting to the public, and the newspapers encourage this by writing about a prisoner sometimes as if he were a peep-show. There was a Penrudocke case in which a duchess was involved and condemned to prison. The excitement of the press knew no bounds. A Daniel come to judgment,—a duchess in prison. Civilisation could have no further triumphs. Then they never left the unfortunate woman alone. They described every day her demeanour in prison, her dress, the letters she wrote, even the full contents of the post-cards she wrote; and when this was disallowed they actually published the postmarks of the

letters she received in her cell.

The public and the newspapers generally have a curious habit of taking sides in a criminal case, like schoolboys in a quarrel. If the accused is "one of us" by right of friendship, family, or politics, he is pampered and supported in his trial as though he was a sick president. A peculiarly cold-blooded murder occurred at Malaga. One of the chief officers of the town was murdered in the street. The whole city followed his funeral, and the mob was ready to tear to pieces the murderer on the evening of the tragedy. It was curious to hear the general remark that the prisoner would never live to be tried, but would die "somehow" in prison. But he had friends, and sympathy soon began to make itself felt. A week after the murder the criminal was alluded to as "the unfortunate actor in the sad event of last week," and a few days later still as "*the victim of an incitement to assassination.*" I think this instance of journalistic euphemism would be hard to beat.

CHILDREN OF TEMPEST.¹

A TALE OF THE OUTER ISLES.

BY NEIL MUNRO.

CHAPTER XXVI. — A NIGHT'S VOYAGE.

THE sloop was like the grave, her only voice the ripple at her bows as she swung to her chain; the isle of Uist was asleep, with the thunder an echo far off, somewhere to the north-east, waking the glens in Skye. Dark John stood on the deck, fidgeting, all ears for a sound from below, when the skipper burst from the companion, ran past him in the dark, and bawled in the forepart of the ship upon his hands. They came up half-clad; he set them to the halyards, crying out his orders like a man demented with some sudden fear, and himself pulling at ropes as if his vessel was on a lee shore and her helm gone.

"Skipper! skipper!" said one of the Macleods, spitting on his hands, "have you heard by any chance of a dancing anywhere that there should be such a devil's hurry, and us in the middle of our sleep?" But Jib-boom was not for argument or explanation, and aimed a blow at him that threw him up against the windlass. "When you're there anyway," said he, "just up with her anchor, and then you'll maybe waken." The smugglers, used to sudden alarms, wrought fast

and hard; a south-west wind blowing briskly into the bay made their quittance easy; Dark John was still without a word of explanation when the *Happy Return* was sailing, froth at her bows and her sticks all creaking, along the island's edge, making for Benbecula. He was the only one on the ship beyond her skipper who knew they carried an unwilling passenger.

"Faith! you have not lost much time about it, whatever," said he at the first chance he got of a word.

Jib-boom was in a sweat. He stood under the lantern, mopping his face and glowering at the deck, like a man in some confusion of mind, though the navigation of his ship might have been expected more properly to engage him.

"This is the bonny business!" said he. "I took in hand with the pock-marked fellow up yonder in Creggans to carry your passenger, but little was it in my mind that this would be the sort of person I have here."

"Well, she came quiet enough with me, I'll warrant you," said John; "and so far as I could hear, she did not make much objection with yourself."

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"And that's the cursed thing!" cried the skipper. "If she had made an uproar I could have managed to get up a spirit in myself; but there she's bolted in my cabin, the better of me with her eye and with her answer, and no more in fear of me than I'm in fear of yourself, John Dark. 'Haste ye with my letters, good man!' said she when she got down and saw me standing, something like an idiot I can tell you, for the sight of her there gave me the first true notion of what a business I had taken in hand with.—'Haste ye with the letters, good man!' said she, I'm thinking just a bit dubious for the first time herself. 'They're not exactly what you would call here,' said I to her, and little in the humour, I assure you. 'Then,' said she, making to leave, 'I'm made a fool of. I might have known better than to put my trust in the words of an old rascal.'"

"Och! now the creature!" said Dark John, and felt for the solace of his pocket.

"'They're not here the letters,' said I; 'but I'm told they're yonder in Benbecula, and my orders were to bring you there and get them.' 'Whose orders?' said she, like the shutting of a knife. 'Just so!' I thought at that; 'get you on your high horse, mistress, and I'll be in better key to follow you.' 'The Sergeant's orders,' said I. 'It's his great desire to have a word with you up yonder in a place they call the Creggans.' 'I know it very well,' said she; 'the place and the man I have no desire my-

self to see, and I demand that I'm set ashore this instant.' I'll never deny that at that I swithered, for she was so cool. But she did a thing that made me keep my promise to the Sergeant; she looked about and saw a knife that was on a shelf, and thinking I did not see her, whipt it under her plaid, with her face getting red. Thinks I, 'My lady, you are able to look after yourself!' and with that I steps back and locks the door on her. It's the first time ever there was a key turned in my command, and I'll warrant it's the last. She never gave a cry, and I'm not in the humour at all, at all!"

He turned round at a sound of flapping canvas, and damned his men for slack cloth.

"There's a gale behind us there," said he to the old man; "but I'll take the whole of it in my sails if I was blown over Benmore, for I'm anxious to get quit of my share of this affair that never came an honest smuggler's way before. Give me the Barra stuff, if it was gulping in the scuppers and all the country chasing me. I could make something of it; but here was I in my dreams so easy on't, and you drag me from my blanket to deal with a woman."

"They're the devil's own, I'll not deny it, little hero," said Dark John. "It's myself am as keen to be out of it as you. And we have had but the start of it. O king! amn't I glad I'm not the Sergeant, that has got to come round her with the coaxing?"

"Coaxing may come round her; but her like was never come round by anything like command," said Jib-boom, and went to the companion and bent his head to listen. There was never a sound from below. "She beats me clean!" said he. "If it wasn't for yon knife in the nook of her plaid, I would see you to the Worst Place before I would draw a bolt on her. I'm not the least bit in the key for such kidnapping, and what in the world's the meaning of it?"

Dark John took a chew of dulse. "There, good man!" said he, "you beat me, but I'm thinking it's all in the way of Corodale's courting."

"Oh, courting!" said Jib-boom. "Oh, now, if it was but the courting, it's a ploy that takes my fancy, and faith! when I think on it, there's no wonder Herself is so cool about it. But I wish you had made it up between you all to do the thing in better weather."

The sloop went through the dark like a drunk man stumbling; waves came over her bows and splashed in the seamen's faces, and wore like burns along the deck, for Jib-boom was taking out of her all the north he could. Rain began, and heavily, though it would be hard to guess what was rain and what the spray. The ship was full of noises, as if she was tormented. In every spar she strained; the shrouds were humming, points tap-tap-tapped on the canvas, and the leeches tugged for freedom till the sheets were creak-

ing. In her hold, in her cabin, strange hammerings; about her the hissing wash of the sea, and it on fire. Dark John's terror of the deep made him sick; he hung on a cleat with both hands, that never let go, except in a pause of the vessel's staggering, to make the sign of the cross. The work of the ship went on about him, bustling; the cries at shifting of the tacks, the scamper of the men, barefooted,—he was dead to all, and only conscious of the unstable, awful plank that heaved below him. Some of the men came up in a while and saw his horror in the light of the lantern, his face like skim-milk cheese, and his eyes bulging—even his seaweed forgotten, with its magic power gone. At first they were in the vein to mock him, but he was beyond a sense of it, and gibbered his Gaelic prayers—not the prayers of *Stella Maris* that come to Christians in their tribulation, but ancient heathen supplications long forgotten in Uist, cried in the dark and in the tempest by brutes before the light came.

"Mary keep us! listen to yon! It will sink the sloop on us!" cried Maclean, and in a righteous fury shook Dark John till he lost his hold on the cleat and slid shapeless to the deck in a sort of stupor, where they left him. He lay some hours moaning under a tarpaulin that Jib-boom threw over him. When the wind abated, and he ventured to look up, the beginning of the day was over Eaval Mount in the east, and the sloop was

going close to the shore of Aird. He sat up and looked about him with fishy eyes. She was soaked with sea, and every stitch of her dripping, and still the rain, in a cold, foggy drizzle, made Isle Benbecula like a swamp, wherein cattle waded and the inn of Creggans seemed to stand like a foundered vessel, with the water washing at its windows.

They anchored near the shore; gladly the old man got on his feet and drank with a glutton's eyes the view of the waving grasses, the flat, dark, steadfast sands. "In the mortal world," said he, "I never set eyes on a nobler prospect. *Oh, right!* what a night! what a night! the like I have not passed since I touched the hand of death himself on Michaelmas."

"No more than a puff, I assure you," said Jib-boom; "that's what the weakest of us would be calling it in Skye, where north-west gales are begotten. The worst of it's to come for me, with this one here to be dragged ashore: I would sooner land a cargo of the cordial under the nose of Geordie's gentlemen, and every man a cutlass."

He had a tarred and blistered and unwieldy boat on chocks: he ordered her out and went below, dragging Dark John with him for company, "for I can stand their tongues," said he, "but I cannot stand their weeping."

He was far from understanding his unwilling passenger to think of her in tears. If Anna

had them, they were not for him to see. She had sat through the night in the noisy inwards of the sloop, racking her brain for some purpose in the outrage. That she should have an enemy in all the Outer Isles — Father Ludovick's sister! She felt at times it must be a dream, and tried in vain to wake herself: it was the climax of her nightmare, when, with the cabin still in the light of the lamp that had been left with her, she heard a dubious step on the companion and the door unlocked. Up she sprang with a gasp, and stood with her hand in the nook of her plaid where the knife was. Jib-boom saw the act and rued his office. "On the soul of me!" he thought, "I wish you were ugly." He took off his seaman's hat.

"Carrying stuff for jollity, and for the old, and for the cold's my trade, and I have the name of taking a dram upon occasion; but that's, I'll take my oath on steel, the worst of me."

"You shall suffer for this night's work," cried Anna in English, breaking in upon his speech. "I have no idea what your purpose is; but you shall certainly not escape unpunished."

He scratched his head and looked foolish, and, still with what he meant for deference, "I have not much of the *Beurla*," said he, "and I'm sure you have the most beautiful Gaelic."

"And I keep it for my friends, and honest folk," she answered, still in English;

"the other tongue is good enough for such a vile transaction as this you are engaged in."

"I would not say but what you are quite right," said Jib-boom, quite hearty, and laughed at her readiness. "There was never a lady on my boat before—my grief to say it! and I'll not be sure of the manners for the occasion; but if I could be offering a glass of Barra for morning before you go ashore——"

"Ashore!" said Anna, trying hard to compose herself. "Where?"

"Benbecula!" said Jib-boom. "It was all my contract bargained for that I should bring you here, and here you are, and if you will go back, myself will take you and put you into Boisdale Bay by dinner-time, not a hair the worse for it."

She looked about the cabin where she had passed the night and shuddered. "Not for all the world," she said. "Give me the shore; there's not a creature on the Long Isle would lay a hand on me."

She pushed past him, seeing he was no longer her jailer, and gave a little startled cry, with her heart at her mouth, when she stumbled on a figure crouching on the companion. She looked down and saw Dark John like a toad: his eyes shut up to slits, his jaws industrious, gave him a look more of repugnance than of blame. She stood upon the deck. Benbecula sure enough! —inhospitable, foreign, bleak, no place for the fluttering dove

storm-driven from its home. The men on deck were astounded at the visitation: it was the first knowledge they had of a woman on board.

"Is it Boisdale, then, or here?" the skipper asked her again before she went ashore. "Last night I was the skipper, with the Serjeant here my master; now I'm Dan Mac-Neil."

"Ashore," she answered quickly, never looking at him nor at the men that gathered round.

He handed her into the boat, and took the oars himself; Dark John made to follow, but was thrust back by an oar. "You stay where you are, good man!" the skipper told him; "it is better for your health than the fog on Creggans." The old man cried and pleaded—wept, indeed—upon the bulwark, for this was to spoil all his plans in the interests of Col; but Jib-boom never heeded, rowed ashore, and landed Anna in a creek some hundreds of yards from Creggan's Inn. There was no word passed between them till she stood on the sand and hesitated what she was next to do.

"Tell me this," said he, "and tell me no more. Are you here with your will or not?"

He had his answer only in the look she gave him.

"Then if you'll not come back," said he, "for the love of God keep clear of the inn and strike across for Gramisdale."

She ran across the sand. He watched her for a little,

and then rowed quickly back again. "I'm not in the key," to the sloop. Her sails were said he, "for argument with down; he ordered them aloft yon fellow."

CHAPTER XXVII.—A PRISONER.

Anna ran to where the sand met the tufts of short salt grass, her spirit broken, and her limbs trembling under her, now that she was free. She was heedless at first where she went, so long as she put distance between her and that dreadful vessel; and the first thing that brought her to her senses and made her think she was not out of danger yet was the crowing of a cock in Creggans. She was so close to the place she could have hailed it. She had thought herself safe anywhere on land; but she had only to look at this place—*forlorn*, ugly, aloof from all the world, and silted to the eyes with sand—to think it dangerous, even if she had not unpleasant recollections of it and the warning of *Jib-boom*. It seemed the venue for wicked deeds, banished by itself from every neighbour, glooming under rotten *ranach* eaves, with curlews piping over it. A mile beyond it she could see the open ford with not a single figure on it (for the hour was early still), and in Creagory of Uist the smoke of morning fires was rising through the rain.

The day was fully come, but not a clear white summer light, rather a wandered dusk, and a cold air that chilled to the marrow. In such a mitigate light, and at such an early

hour, she hoped she might steal past the inn without observation, and so escape the need for a circuit that would bring her in among the impassable lochs that lay in that case between her and Gramisdale. She crept with caution past the outhouses of the inn, saw with satisfaction that there was as yet no smoke from its chimneys, and ran on again on the sand of the road leading to it, without courage to look behind her at its door and windows. She felt she had not far to go for safety, when something awakened all her apprehension.

The sand was wet with rain—it might have been the shore she moved on, so soaked it was; and there, plainly running from her very feet, was the print of some one else's walking! A man had passed in the same direction as she now followed: it must have been but lately, for the hollows of his steps were dry. In Creggans Inn, then, some one was assuredly afoot, no matter how early was the hour.

Her eyes followed the track away ahead of her: there was a feeling in her mind that if by some magic she could see far enough,—and it need not be very far either,—there would be the landlord of that dreadful house at the end of the foot-prints and waiting for her—a notion that had hardly formed

itself in her mind till with a stifled little cry she saw a figure dimly in the distance. It was too far off to be certain whether it was man or beast; but Anna, terrified to think her enemy was already on her, turned without a moment's hesitation and ran back, convinced at last that her surest safety lay among the men of the smuggler's sloop. As she saw the inn and its door and windows now, it showed no sign of life, but the door was standing open! She had a fear that her very breathing would betray her: the house in its silence seemed the abode of evil, of things inhuman; its windows looked at her, dark and peering and intent. She was relieved to get out of sight of them round the gable-end, but how deep was her dismay to discover that the sloop was gone!

It slanted a long way from the land, as if it hurriedly fled, itself, from an outrage,—too far away already to hope for any help from it.

For the first time since she had been deceived and put on board the vessel, Anna wept. The *Happy Return*, that had been hateful to her a quarter of an hour ago, was now become, in the memory of her skipper's words, her last friend departed, and she was left alone to dangers the nature of which she could not guess. Where to could she fly now, with the open sea, the long flat sands where concealment was impossible, before her, and behind, this sinister inn and the person who was coming along the road

that was her only way to safety?

A touch on her shoulder almost made her faint; she turned to see the Sergeant's wife.

"Oh, daughter!" cried the woman, in a trepidation that was plain in every feature, "what are you doing here? You could not be in a worse part of Isle Benbecula. Come back! come back! come back!" She caught Anna by the arm and drew her to the door of the outhouse, so much anxiety in her manner that Anna could not have a doubt her intention was a kind one.

"For Mary's love! my dear, you must hide yourself this moment: my man is coming on the road there, and once he sets an eye on you, I tell you that you're lost." She had the morning untidiness of the slattern born, her hair in wisps about her haffits, her buttons out of their places, and her feet unshod. Anna, looking at her, someway lost her fear, and put up her hand to draw the woman's clothes together at the neck, as if it was a child. The Sergeant's wife dashed down the hand impatient, and panted new alarms, even weeping in the stress of her agitation.

"What does he want with me, your man?" asked Anna, still with a feeling that wherever there was another woman, and she the innkeeper's wife, there could be no great danger.

"Whatever he wants he'll get it, if it was your very life. Come in, come in, and I will hide you."

"In the house?" asked Anna, dubious, for now they were almost through the byre, and the woman led her to a door that gave entrance to the back of the house itself.

"It must be that or nothing. Look at the sand." She pointed through the byre-door behind them to the flat grey plain, that a glance could show every object on for miles. "And look at this." She showed the byre had no place that could hide so little as a bird, for half the roof was off it, and the morning light was in every cranny. "He has been, my man, for grass; the byre is the first place he will come to with it, and I must hide you up the stair. O God! I hear him coming!"

They dashed into the house and up the stair. "If he makes for the byre first, you will hear him, and I will cough, that you may come down the stair and out at the front and on your way." She had but time to say this before she drew the door softly after her and went down the stair. Anna was left alone. She had a heart thundering as she sank in a chair and looked about her at the chamber where she had spent such hours of misery and of wakefulness on the night before her uncle's funeral. Had it been some deep presentiment that had seized her then, that this was yet to be the place of danger for her? Sometimes she thought that this was still a part of the first experience there, and that all the months that lay between were only a dream. There from the win-

dow, soiled more foul than ever by the sea-birds, was the same long ford, her place of terror and romance, but vacant in the drizzling rain; the sand, the sand everywhere else around her, and far away in another clime, North Uist a dirty dun in the fallow morning light, the mount of Eaval just a phantom in the mist. She pressed her hands on her heart to keep it still, and listened.

What hope she had of a flight from the front departed when she heard a footstep come in at the door.

The innkeeper threw his creel of grass on the kitchen floor and bawled on his wife for ale. She put it before him trembling, though she did her best to master it. He dragged the grass through the kitchen, threw it in the byre, and looked about him and over the empty sand and out to sea. The *Happy Return* was plain to view, yet he saw her with no surprise, but gave a muttered oath, and came hurriedly back to the kitchen. At a draught he emptied the can and ordered more, though plainly it was not the first he had had that morning. His wife, in tremors, gave him it; he stood with his back to the fire and his eye on the stair. Once or twice he chuckled, but a sullen look of drunken anger was his general aspect. The woman, nervous, thinking of her fugitive, went about her usual morning offices in a bustle, sweeping the sand from the hearthstone, stirring it into a cloud in the room by flicking a sloven's rag over stools and chairs.

"You're damned particular this morning," said he in English that she did not understand, though she surmised the meaning, and tried to make her industry no more zealous than on ordinary occasions. His words were plainly not meant for her only, and Anna up the stair could hear them. She felt that she was lost!

It was the cat and the mouse. "I wonder what I'll do next," he said, this time in the Gaelic.

"There's the cow to feed," his foolish woman ventured. Anna above could not but wonder at such simplicity, for the man's voice plainly made it clear that he suspected.

"Feed the cow!" he cried, and laughed most villainously. "A fine occupation for a gentleman that has sailed the oceans and has killed his men abroad like fish. You must think of something else, my love."

Even her poor intelligence told her now that there was something cunning in his manner. She answered him nothing, and he laughed at her again, a most ugly brute, his face pitted as if some one in hobnails had trampled it. He turned from the scrutiny of her to glance at the stair; she was almost certain now that he knew; Anna had no doubt of it.

"I thought I saw some one yonder," said he at last.

"What!" said his wife, as grey in the face as a rag.

"What! what!" he mocked her. "I THOUGHT I SAW SOME ONE!" he roared in a fury at her evasion, and threw the empty vessel at her. She was

used to that, and crouched in time to evade it, declaring that she had seen nobody.

"You saw nobody!" he cried, and caught at her by the arm. "Come here! come here!" He dragged her to the doors, both back and front, and pointed to the marks of Anna's footsteps on the sand. "You saw no one, daughter of hell! for a cursed liar! Where's the girl?" His wife said nothing; Anna hurriedly looked at the window and tried it, to find its latticed space had never been built to open. The man's heavy step sounded on the stair. He came in with something bestial in his eye and mouth, the odour of the drunkard round him. His wife made an attempt to follow; when he turned to shut the door behind him, and saw her, he put his foot out and thrust her down the stair. She fell to the bottom with a cry of pain that he paid no heed to.

"Oh, you are a brute!" cried Anna, her fear lost in an indignation at the act.

"That's my way," said he, drunkenly laughing. "No argument, just the one heave and be done with it," and he threw himself in a chair with his back to the door. Anna kept on the other side of a table that filled the middle of the room. "Just the one heave," said he, with that satisfaction a man half-drunken has in a phrase that has come to him without consideration, as folk are said to find the happiest parts of poetry. "Just the heave!" he spoke in English, with an accent that was gathered from many breeds of

them that speak English. He looked with a bullock's vacant eye, insane, at least with nothing to be read in it,—a wandering eye that settled on no one thing for a second. He made an effort, and seemed to catch the loose ends of his reason again, for in a bit his vision cleared and fixed itself on Anna's face.

"Just the one heaven!" said he again, as if he had freshly discovered a pregnancy of meaning in it. "It's the only way with them. I would make her mind her own affairs if I had to break her back. Just the heaven, like yon. Do you hear her whining?" He rose in a passion with oaths and his hand on the door, and then it seemed that his mind came back to Anna. He sat down again. The sobbing of the woman below filled the house.

"You cannot say I brought you here, anyway," he said, pulling himself together again. "I'm out at my work and I come in, and here you are in my house and my wife hiding you. Now that you are here——"

"You know very well that I did not come here by my own will," interrupted Anna. "What is this about letters for me?"

He seemed to wonder for a moment, and then he laughed.

"Letters! From Corodale the stuck priest! It was not a bad plan, not a bad plan that, though it was not my own idea. You came here for letters; it's a pity you have made so long a journey for no end, because there's devil the

letter I ken of, unless your own friend Col may have it."

"Very well," said Anna; "I must go; let me pass," and to try him, she took a step towards the door.

"No hurry," said he, rising with a laugh, almost as if he were quite sobered at the idea of her escaping, and put out a hand to keep her back. "Sit down and talk. Now that you're here and there's something of a hurry, you know what I want."

"I have not the least idea," she replied.

"Oh, you can easily be guessing," said he with a leer; "it might be yourself, but it's not. Where's the money?"

"The money!" she repeated, sure that now he was mad indeed.

"The Loch Arkaig money, the *ulaidh*; you know very well what I'm meaning. Your uncle left it to you, your brother brags it'll never be handled, and I'm loth to let the mercies go to waste. If——"

"I know nothing about it," cried Anna, astounded that she should not sooner have divined the reason for this outrage on her liberty in a country where she had not a single enemy. "I know nothing about it."

"Not yet," said the Sergeant, "not yet perhaps, except the place where they hid it, and that's as much as I want to ken myself. The time is up at Michaelmas—twenty thousand sassenach! By God! to leave it so long was a madness. And his reverence says it's cursed, and you'll never touch it!

Well, I'm not so dirty particular,—I'll touch it. Come now! you will tell me where to look for it. You know."

"I can tell nothing," said Anna, and shut her lips in a way there was no mistaking.

"Let me get my hand on the stuff, and I'll put you back on the shore of Boisdale." His eye had grown quite clear and steady; he was almost sober with the thought that his purpose was about to be accomplished.

"I can tell nothing," Anna said again with firmness.

"But you know?" he cried, alarmed tremendously to think that after all perhaps she was as much in ignorance as himself of where the fifty-year fortune lay.

She did not answer for a little till she heard the sob of the woman down below. It might have frightened another, her it only angered. "I know; of course I know!" said she quickly, as if to punish him. "I'm the only one who does know, but I shall certainly never tell."

He laughed at that, relieved. "It's not the first time I had the secret under my roof," said he; "it went out the way it came in last time, but this time there'll be a difference. You'll never set foot across

this door alive until you tell me."

"Then I'll go over it dead!" said Anna, without a moment's hesitation. "I would not tell if you tortured me."

He had drawn his chair up close to the table, on the other side of which she stood with her hand on it, looking down at him; he suddenly grasped her by the wrist. She struggled, but he freed her only far enough to get her fingers, and he crushed them till she nearly swooned with the pain, bending on her at the time a look that was half menace and half vanity of his own strength. She bit her under lip in agony, and the perspiration came upon her brow, but she did not utter word or cry.

"Tell me!" he said with an oath, and pressed harder. She gave a little catch at the throat, as if she tried to keep her tongue from being traitor. "No, no, no!" she cried, "not if you kill me!"

"We'll see about that," he said, releasing her. "Look at me; I have killed men."

Anna was comforted somewhat for the thought of the knife in the nook of her plaid.

"I have killed men. It has not troubled me more than if they had been rabbits."

CHAPTER XXVIII.—THE PRICE OF FREEDOM.

For a while he stared at her, to put her out of countenance, or give her a frightened notion of his power. She met his

glowering with a steadfast eye, convinced that, like every bully, he was one whose passions fed on other folk's fears. A fragile

girl she looked in the morning light; but so trim in her garments, so dainty in the dressing of her hair, for all her night's adventures, that through his clouded senses and the vulgar greed that made him seek to terrify her, he felt at times the influence of a charm.

"There's one thing sure at any rate," said he to her, "you're uncommon dour for all that's of you. Well, so am I! and there's a pair of us. Ask the wife. It may be that you're thinking your friends will not be long of finding you in Creggans Inn; let me tell you that I laid my plans to send them looking for you in another place, and that's at the bottom of Boisdale Bay. They'll never dream of coming here for you. Or you may be thinking that I'll tire of keeping you a prisoner. Not a bit of me! so long as there's a handful of meal in the girdle: we have seldom company, and when it comes the way I'm loth to part with it, I'm telling you, and there was never a fellow fonder of the ladies. In my time—in my time! Devil a foot on the sand there for weeks on end except Jib-boom's—a dog! I'll make him sweat for it, that did his best to let you slip from me in spite of what he promised."

She never answered. She looked at him either with a contempt that would have maddened him if he had any conceit of himself to understand it, or more often had her gaze on the cheerless prospect that was visible from the window—

the rain streaming on the lattice lozens in blobs as if it had been oil; the desolate grey sand with birds, that were to be envied for their freedom, blown about upon it as they fed in a wind that swelled till it lashed the shore with breakers. A mist shut off the shore, the ford, the isle of Uist, from her: if Creggans Inn was out of the world and forgotten at any time, 'twas now assuredly more than ever.

When she let her eyes stray to the window he imagined he knew her thoughts, and that it was from that direction she hoped for her relief. "Take my word for it," he told her, "I have not seen a soul from that airt for a month. I could not get custom in this infernal place if I ran ale free from the spigot: I'm owing that to the priests that have given my inn a bad name, and your brother, by all accounts, as bad as anybody."

But it was not of her own distress she thought at all; it was on the vacant home in Boisdale, and her brother Ludovick distracted at her absence. She blamed herself most bitterly for coming away last night without leaving any hint behind of what had taken her. If it was true that something had been done to make them think that she was drowned, his condition at this moment would be terrible. At the very thought of it she felt like crying out her secret and securing her liberty, so that she might fly to him; but she was not yet subdued.

By-and-by she was left by her tormentor, who carefully locked the door and took the key with him. For more than an hour his voice came roaring up the stair in the foulest condemnation of his wife, whose fall, it seemed, had sorely bruised her. If Anna had the faintest hope of intercession from that quarter, she soon abandoned it; for it seemed indeed as if the wife had greater cause for terror than herself.

A dungeon could not well have been more cruel than this narrow, mildewed, dusty chamber under the bracken eaves; a dungeon could not have been more secure, of that she lost no time in making certain, and yet to make it all the safer her jailer never set a foot outside his kitchen-door. Once or twice his wife went out for peats or water, once in mournful cadence to cry upon her cow, that must have fed sparsely on that sandy plain. Anna wondered that there was never a glance up at the prison windows, until it struck her that the man could see his wife from the open kitchen-door, and that she dare not show her interest.

It seemed as if the place was in a perpetual dusk or dawn, so little did the passage of the day affect the light of it. No sun came through the mist, the rain was unceasing. Anna had no watch; she could not tell the hours. Her idleness was an agony to her; for very relief to her feelings she could have beat on the doors and

cried aloud, but she knew that this would be useless, and the discovery of a half-knitted stocking with the wires in it provided a blessed relief, for it gave her an occupation. The sight of her thus engaged gave the man his first apprehension that, after all, perhaps she was not to be conquered. He had come up with food for her—at least he did not mean that she should perish of starvation.

Twice he returned, to find her spirit still unbroken. At the last, exasperated by indifference, he made to seize her; a cry broke from her, and she almost showed the knife, but his wife ran up the stair and drew on herself his anger. And so the day passed. The gloaming came, the room grew darker, night fell sudden and thick. Anna heard the woman rake the peats of the kitchen-fire and hum the smooching-hymn of the islands, that her man broke in upon with unbelieving blasphemy.

It was a night of storm. Gusts shook the inn, as if it would be levelled with the sand; in the cabin of the sloop itself she had not a greater feeling of insecurity. Over the island rang the shock of sea; the rain in spurts, as if it had been spindrift, thrashed upon the window. When sea-birds passed it was with mournful cries, as if they had been children pained; the odd humanity of their voices added to the girl's distress. She was to spend the night a prisoner, then, without the trivial solace even of a light, and she dreaded

what might happen if she fell asleep. There was a great bedstead in the room: with a miracle of labour she dragged it across the door, and lay for long fighting against the drowsiness that was natural, seeing the previous night had brought no slumber, and at last she fell asleep.

A sound of breaking glass wakened her, and the dash of rain in her face. Through the broken window the wind drove in, possessing the chamber.

What had happened? Sitting on the bed, breathless, she listened; but only the fury of the storm was audible. All that was plain to her straining senses was that some one had thrown something at the window, and that it had fallen into the room. A sudden idea sent her quickly to her knees, and feeling about the floor till she came on a key. Manifestly the woman at last had come to her assistance. The key would not have been thrown in at the window unless there was a chance of her using it with a prospect of success, nor (she thought) could the woman have possessed herself of it if her husband were alert. And yet for a long while Anna was irresolute, dreadful that it might, after all, be some device of the innkeeper. At last she gathered her courage and unlocked the door.

The storm drowned every sound except a stertorous breathing in the kitchen, where, to her dismay, was still a light. A score of strange surmises, fears, and plans

alternative, held her for a while on the landing; but she reflected nothing was to lose by an endeavour at escape, and so she crept cautiously down the stair. At its foot, she knew, she must decide whether her safer way lay through the kitchen or the byre.

When she got to the foot she could see more than half the kitchen, and her eyes were held there, fascinated for a little at the sight of the Sergeant sitting by the fire on a chair, his feet on a stool and his face towards her. A crucifix that hung on a joist lighted every way of escape for her; but the man was plainly asleep, his chin on his breast, his red hair with a bald patch conferring upon him an aspect curiously grotesque, an aspect elderly and innocent. Beyond him was a bed recessed in the wall, and his wife with a face of the greatest apprehension lay in it, signing to Anna that her flight must be by the byre-door.

The girl pushed open the door and drew it after her. She stood in the dark for a little, listening to the landlord's stertor; the byre was warm and odorous milkily; on the sheltered side of the house it had an air of peace and safety. She felt her way to the other door that lay between her and liberty; her hand was on the bar, when she stumbled against the foot of a ladder, that fell with a crash that shook her with terror. A wild fluttering of

wings filled the byre, and the alarm of fowls that had been disturbed in their roosting. She plucked the door open and dashed into the night.

The innkeeper woke at the sound of his noisy poultry, divined the cause, and quickly made for the byre. The crusic light showed him the outer door was open: with an oath he ran back through the kitchen and out into the darkness before his house. He caught the fugitive as she came round the gable.

"A droll time to be leaving an inn!" said he; "but it's not the first time I've had a customer go in the dark and forget to pay the lawing." He drew her into the house, and seated her in the chair he had been sleeping in. "This is your work, is it?" he said to his wife, malignant. She shrank in her recess like an animal in its form, speechless and in terror of his anger, for still in Anna's hand was the key, for evidence of what the manner of her escape from her cell had been.

Luckily sleep had sobered him, and had even put him in a humour to enjoy the chagrin of his prisoner's face and the mortal terror of his wife: he burst out laughing.

"Three o'clock in the morning," said he, in the tone of a genial friend; "it's the hour I was always at my best when a crack was going, and I'm not a bit vexed to have your company. I was ganting my head off here, and I suppose I fell asleep, and this one here in the

bed that's whining took the chance. Just that! just that! that's a thing to deal with later. But tuts! to be flying like yon in a night like this! it was fair ridiculous!"

He drew himself a horn of ale, with something of a new assurance in his manner that Anna wondered at. He could not think her yielding, and yet in her heart she was, whenever she had a thought of Ludovick's lamentation. That alone daunted her; otherwise, in the light, and with the presence of the woman, she was almost at her ease, assured that her jailer would not venture on desperate measures, and that sooner or later he must let her go.

The reason for his new complacency was soon apparent; in his sober mind had come an inspiration that would never have come to him tipsy, that he had all the time in his possession something to buy her secret with. Dark John had got her on board the smuggler with a tale of letters for her: the tale was not without some truth at its foundation, for letters for her there were, and one of them, filched by one thief from another, was at that moment in his pocket. He drew it suddenly out, without a word, and held it before her.

Freedom itself could not have given her a greater joy than she experienced at the sight of her own name in Duncan's handwriting: with a little cry she stretched to snatch her property.

"Oh no, stop a bit!" said the innkeeper. "You're thrawn, but I'm pretty thrawn myself too. There's plenty more letters where this one came from, and I could easily put you in the way of getting them—but on the one consideration."

Could she buy anything more precious with a single sentence—a sentence that left her none the poorer? The revelation hung on her lips, but it did not find expression.

"No," she told him firmly; "I cannot tell without the consent of my brother."

He laughed in her face. "A likely thing!" he cried. "And who's to go and ask him for it?

I'll warrant it would be a ticklish errand. I wouldn't care to be the fellow myself would haggle with your brother for the twenty thousand pounds, and I have not seen the priest yet was such a fool as this you're thinking Father Ludovick, to let a fortune slip out of the family."

"My brother hates the very mention of it: I think he would believe he could not punish you worse than by putting you in the way of getting it."

"By the Lord! I wish he would try me," said the innkeeper, and then gave a startled cry. Anna jumped to her feet; outside somebody hailed the inn.

(To be continued.)

HYMN TO THE PATRIARCHS ; OR, ABOUT THE
PRIMITIVE HUMAN RACE.

BY GIACOMO LEOPARDI.

Translated by Sir Theodore Martin, K.C.B.

YE sires illustrious of our human race,
Of you the song of your afflicted sons
Shall praises ring throughout the ages. You
To the Eternal Mover of the stars
Were dearer far, and born into the world
'Neath balmier skies, and to a happier doom,
Than we. It was not love divine, nor Heaven's
Just laws, that laid on miserable man
Sufferings incurable ; so that, born to grief,
Death and the darkness of the tomb to him
Should seem more sweet than the sun's golden light :
And if it be, as runs the old-world tale,
That your primeval lapse subjected man
To the dire thralldom of disease and woe,
Yet 'twas your sons' more flagrant wickedness,
Their unrest, and mad follies, that provoked
The anger of the offended gods, and arm'd
Boon Nature's hand against them,—the kind hand,
Contemned and slighted,—of their genial nurse ;
Whence ever feebler grew the flame of life,
And on the fruit of the maternal womb
There fell a curse, and Erebus with all
Its terrors and its gloom emerged on earth.

Thou, of the human family the sire
And guide primeval, wert the first to see
The sun, the circling spheres' empurpled glow,
The new-begotten offspring of the plains,
To catch the whispers of the breeze, that blew
Across the virgin meadows, when with roar
Unheard the headlong Alpine torrents smote

The rocks and unfrequented valleys, when
Peace, by none noted, reign'd o'er what in time
Became the pleasant seats of nations famed
In story, and of cities dinn'd with noise;
When lone and silently the kindly rays
Of Phœbus and the golden moon climb'd up
The sloping hills, unfurrowed by the plough.
Oh then! how blest the yet unpeopled earth,
That nothing knew of sin, or grief, or care!
And oh! what anguish, what a train immense
Of bitterest trials, have the ruthless Fates
Begot, oh hapless father, for thy sons!
Behold! A madness preternatural,
That made a brother's murderous hand imbrue
The thirsty earth with blood, and death unfold
His loathsome pinions to heaven's blessed air.
Trembling the fratricide roams to and fro,
Fleeing in terror shadows deep and lone,
And threats of stifled anger in the winds,
That rustle through the foliage of the woods.
He was the first to set up sheltering roofs,
A home and harbourage for wasting cares;
Anon, blind mortals, cowering in the pangs
Of mere despair, a common safety sought
In dwellings link'd together, whence it was
That helpless hands shrank from the curv'd plough,
And the field-labourer's sweat was counted shame;
Luxurious vice all round engendered sloth;
The sluggish limbs of native strength were reft,
Souls grew enfeebled, indolent, and base,
And, prone to fear, the warlike spirit dead,
Mankind to slavery stoop'd, of ills the worst.

Thee too I hail, who from the baleful air,
And from wide ocean's waves, that thundering beat
Against the cloud-capp'd mountain-peaks, didst save
A race iniquitous; thee, unto whom,
From the blind wastes of sky, and mountain-tops
Afloat amid the deep, the snow-white dove
The emblem brought of a returning hope,

When, breaking through the clouds, the sinking sun
Dyed with the rainbow's hues the inky rack,
And they that had been saved returned to earth,
And dwelt there, fostering all the ills that wait
On passions unrestrained, and foul desires.
Upon the regions, unexplored till then,
Of the avenging ocean hands profane
They laid, and on new shores beneath new stars
Impress'd the seal of suffering and of woe!

Now in my heart I meditate of thee,
Upright and valiant, and of those that were
The generous scions of thy loins; and I
Will tell, how sitting at high noon beneath
The homely shelter of thy tent, hard by
The banks of velvet grass that fed thy flocks,
Thou by celestial pilgrims in disguise
From heaven wert blest; will tell of thee, oh son
Of sage Rebecca, how at eventide
Beside the rustic well, in Haran's vale,—
The haunt of shepherds in their hour of ease,—
Love for rich Laban's beauteous daughter smote
Thy heart—unconquerable love—for which
Thy constant soul did without murmur bear
Long years of exile, and unceasing toil,
And the detested yoke of servitude.

Certes, there was (nor does Æonian song
Nor legendary lore in this beguile
The greedy vulgar ear with fable vain)
A period friendly to the human race,
When earth was both delectable and dear,
And in a golden tide the years flowed on.
'Twas not that purest milk gush'd from the flanks
Of the maternal rocks in copious stream,
Or that the shepherds led in sportive mood
The tiger to the sheepfolds, or the wolves
To the accustomed springs, but that mankind,
In ignorance of what their fate might bring,
And of its trials, lived from sorrow free.

The secret laws of Nature and of Heaven,
The sweet illusions, frauds, the kindly veil,
To them were all-sufficing, and, content
With hope, their bark to port bore gaily on.

So now in Californian forests vast
A happy race is born. Not at their hearts
Gnaws pallid care, nor wasted are their limbs
By fell disease; to them the trees are fruit,
The cavern'd rocks a haven of retreat,
Their drink the brooks that keep the valleys green,
And black death's day's unthought of till it comes.
Oh! how defenceless are wise Nature's realms
Against the impious daring of our time!
With frenzy irrepressible we invade
Strange shores, strange cave-retreats, and forests strange,
And train the peoples we invade to new
Anxieties, and desires unfelt before,
And chase a happiness, that eludes our grasp,
Into the farthest regions of the West.

TO THE SOUTH COAST BY TURNPIKE ROAD.

It all arose out of an after-dinner bet. W., with that full comprehension of horse-mastership which he had acquired during his eighteen months' experience with the Yeomanry in South Africa, said that it was impossible. My wife was dubious, and reserved her opinion. I, remembering how much we used to do with our horses in India during the cold weather, was positive, so we clinched the wager. It was not a big wager, only a table for three at the Carlton and three stalls at the Play. That there should be no misunderstanding we put it on paper: "J. guarantees to drive any horse of his selection between sunrise and sunset on any day before Easter week, from Westminster Bridge to Eastbourne, taking three persons in the trap, and to bring his animal to its destination undistressed and fit for work on the following day. He also guarantees never to use a whip, or unduly urge the animal during the journey."

This was drawn up and signed during the second journey of the port-decanter, and as the ladies withdrew the groom was summoned.

"Baker, we are going to drive to Eastbourne."

"Yessir."

"Read that."

The groom read the legend slowly, while W. looked at him in the confident manner characteristic of the man who considers he has struck a good

bargain. Baker put the paper down, with the laconic comment, "Yessir."

This ready approval on the part of the trusty henchman somewhat modified W.'s satisfaction.

"My ponies are not in hard enough work to do it, are they, Baker?"

"I think Cornelia might, sir."

"No, she is just changing her coat. Don't you know some animal that would do better?"

"How far is it, sir?"

"Just over sixty miles. How about that little grey mare?"

"She'd do it on her head, sir. Why, the greengrocer as she belongs to thinks nothing of driving her down to Brighton of a Sunday afternoon, and brings her back the next morning. Like as not sending her out in one of Maple's vans the next day."

"Very well, Baker; hire her for me for the week. Have a glass of wine."

"Very good, sir. Your very good health, sir."

By this time W.'s face was a study. But he steadily stuck to his guns, remarking that the whip clause would defeat me. We then rejoined the ladies, and, still full of our subject, we hunted up an old volume of '*Paterson's Roads*,' being "an entirely original and accurate description of all the direct and principal cross-roads in England and Wales," re-

edited by Edward Mogg in the year 1829, to which this eminent authority then added "topographical sketches of the several cities, market-towns, and remarkable villages; and descriptive accounts of the principal seats of the nobility and gentry, the antiquities, natural curiosities, and other remarkable objects throughout the kingdom."

Taking it for granted that the main roads to-day are much as they were when Mr Mogg graced the box-seat of a stage-coach, we spent a very pleasant hour making out the route which we should follow to carry out the wager. We agreed that the itinerary should be by way of the Brighton road as far as East Grinstead, and thence *via* Uckfield and East Hoathly to Eastbourne, making in all sixty-three miles from Westminster Bridge, traversing the most beautiful portions of Surrey and Sussex.

All told, Mr Mogg promised us an interesting journey, and the first entry with reference to our projected trip ran:—

"VAUXHALL. *Vauxhall Gardens*.—The time when this enchanting place of amusement was first opened for the entertainment of the public is not easy to be ascertained; but in the reign of Queen Anne it appears to have been a place of great public resort, for in the 'Spectator,' No. 383, dated May 20, 1712, Mr Addison has introduced his friend Sir Roger de Coverley as accompanying him in a voyage from the Temple Stairs to Vauxhall, then termed Spring Gardens. Of late years the season commences in June and terminates in August, during which the Gardens are open three nights a-week—viz., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; the price of admission is 3s. 6d.

Vauxhall Gardens are unquestionably the most celebrated public gardens in Europe, and, under the management of the present proprietors, have received many very considerable alterations, by which they have been greatly improved."

But as this is an account of our wager, we will not dwell longer on the oddities, fascinating though they are, contained in 'Paterson's Roads.' Later we may find it necessary to refer to Mr Mogg for further information concerning the "natural curiosities" on the road to Eastbourne.

Eight-tenths of the inhabitants of London willingly ous-tail, during the summer months, their day by remaining in bed during its most pleasurable hours. In fact those who make a practice of rising with the sun have for some time a city in which it is hard to recognise the great palpitating metropolis of the British Empire as we know it in its business hours. Beyond a solitary policeman at the corner of the street and a belated cab, with its driver half asleep inside it, there was nothing astir when Baker brought the trap and the greengrocer's mare round to the door on that eventful Thursday morning which was to see us taking the road to the south coast. W. had been unable to come with us, so it was agreed that my wife and Baker should make up the load, and that W. should be at Eastbourne to meet us on arrival.

"How is the mare, Baker?"

"She is fit enough, I think, sir. But you will have to go

easy with her, sir, as she had a terrible hard day yesterday. They had her out in one of Maple's vans, and she only got in at eleven o'clock last night. They do treat her bad. They just turned her into the stall as she came in. If I hadn't gone and fetched her last night, she'd never have been fit to drive to-day. She was just black. I had to wash her all over. But I did her well, and she had a big feed."

This did not sound promising; but I knew that the little mare was good stuff and in hard work, so that if treated properly and kindly she would not find the distance beyond her powers. We drove quietly down to Westminster Bridge and waited there for Big Ben to announce the hour scheduled in the almanacs as that of sunrise for this particular morning. Once the quarter had struck we fairly started on our way.

The first fifteen miles of any journey out of London is not really interesting, and until we reached Croydon we could hope for little relief from that monotonous succession of cheap jerry-built villas which is typical of the modern London suburb. Gone are the past glories of this portion of the Brighton Road, and the modern Jehu finds that he has to exercise his talents in evading electric trams and, as in our own case, avoiding such portions of this latter-day permanent way as the navvies have rendered impassable. But we found companions on the route in the returning empties

from Covent Garden, and one jocular carman, unaccustomed no doubt to the sight of such early road travellers, remarked, "They've evidently had a late night."

As we passed through Brixton, Suburbia was still practically asleep except for the milk-carts; but by the time we had reached Streatham there were some signs that the inhabitants of London were beginning to wake up. The trams became more frequent, and worn-looking men in tall hats and black coats gave evidence of the business cares of London city. Occasional omnibuses, too, put in an appearance, while boys in shirt-sleeves were washing down the fronts of shops.

And thus we came to Croydon. Mr Mogg informed us that "the vicinity of this town is particularly celebrated for field sports, and the chase is here kept up with great spirit." We must allow that we found but small evidence of this proclivity in modern Croydon. Even what we had known as children in the way of fields had now disappeared. The unrelenting grip of the builder had seized it all, and the very meadow in which we had played cricket supported a nondescript structure defaced with that uninspiring legend, "Flats to let." But we are wrong; the chase still flourishes in Croydon — the chase for wealth.

The keen morning air had whetted our appetites; besides, the game little mare, though she was making her own pace, re-

quired attention, so we decided to make our first halt here. But we drove on through the town proper, passing by Crown Hill and through the narrow High Street, which still maintains something of the character which we remembered from our youth. On the Purley road we found the hostel which seemed to suit our ambitions. The bar-tender was engaged in sawdusting his floor, and—shades of the posting days!—seemed quite annoyed that hungry wayfarers should demand a meal at that hour of the morning. "But the cook ain't come,—he never do until eleven o'clock."

"Surely you have some one who could make a cup of coffee? you must serve breakfasts if you have people staying in the hotel." That appeared to open a new line of understanding in the bar-tender, and he made rejoinder—

"Well, if you will 'ave it, where will you 'ave it?"

"In a private room, of course. I have a lady with me."

"We ain't got no private rooms; but you can 'ave it in the coffee-room if the 'ousemaid will let you."

Evidently the housemaid proved tractable, since the bar-tender returned and ushered us up a stairway into a room which looked as if it had been recently dismantled for a spring cleaning or had been looted by a patrol of Rimington's Tigers of South African fame. The barman explained that the local Amateur Dramatic Society had, the evening before, been rehearsing. Evidently "Charley's

Aunt" was their selection. The decorations in this "Cecil" of the Brighton Road showed incongruous taste throughout. Since Croydon, in the days of Mr Mogg, was noted for its sporting interests, we would have expected a landlord's choice in pictorial art to bear some reference to its past glories. Instead, our present host revelled in crude copies of the old Dutch masters; and the only evidence we could discover of that sporting taste, which must be latent, was a stuffed peacock, to which was attached a placard announcing that a reward of ten shillings would be paid to any one supplying information leading to the discovery of the person or persons who had wantonly screwed the neck of the bird into its present grotesque shape. In the midst of these surroundings we waited an hour, while the household conjured up a breakfast and Baker ministered to the wants of the grey mare.

A couple of miles along the Purley road brought us to the end of the electric tramways, and, turning down under a railway-arch, the mare headed for Caterham, and we shook off the last evidences of London and Suburbia. Fortune was favouring us: although there was no sun, we could hardly have chosen a more suitable day for long-distance road travelling. A fresh, warm, spring breeze helped us, and though the sky was overcast, the racing clouds were high and fleecy. On every side, as we left the signs of gregarious man behind us,

nature spoke of Spring. It is only those who dwell in cities who really appreciate the true exhilaration of a spring morning, bringing with it emancipation from the everlasting and wearisome combination of bricks and mortar, the oppression of a smoke-fouled atmosphere, and the unending efforts of the advertising genius. It may have been the softer going under foot, or perhaps the after-effects of the gruel she received at Croydon, that made the mare step out; but it seemed to us, as hedge-row and meadow glided past, that she also felt the influence of the pure Surrey air.

"You mun go through Caterham to get to Godstone;" and the healthy-looking keeper, after mature, and what one would have thought unnecessary, cogitation directed us at a cross turn along the road which had probably been familiar to him since his childhood.

Caterham has not escaped the effects of rapid communication, and on every hand one sees the vandal boards which tell of building-plots and ground leases for sale. Nor can you blame the hard-worked City man if he chooses to live in so restful a place as a valley in the North Downs. It is strange that although Caterham is now a flourishing village, a very large collection of villa residences, yet to Mr Mogg its very name was unknown. But he knew the Rose and Crown Inn, which old-fashioned structure, with its quaint wooden out-houses and stables, may well be taken as typical of the wayside inns of the old coaching

days: in fact, we found ourselves looking for the rubicund host and the loitering postboy in yellow breeches. But imagination could not carry us thus far, since the only occupant of the yard was a patient oilskinned cyclist struggling with a refractory and noisy *teuf-teuf*.

Caterham is behind us, and the last milestone tells that it is nineteen miles from Westminster Bridge and twenty from Cornhill. This, then, must be Godstone, and a reference to a smart butcher's boy proves the reading of 'Pater-son's Roads' to be correct.

If you wish to see scenery it is fashionable to go to our friend Thomas Cook at Ludgate Circus and ask for information from one or another of the well-conditioned young gentlemen behind the counter there. They will sell you scenery tickets to the extent of five pounds or a thousand, according to the length of your purse, your desire, and, not least, your gullibility. Yet is there more beautiful scenery to be found than in the Surrey North Downs between Godstone and Forest Row? The scenery is there; but it lacks, I suppose, the additional attraction of an interpreter, a guide, and a coinage which you do not understand, and in which it is easy to be cheated.

What more in scenery can an Englishman want? What need of excursion tickets and hotel coupons for the Continent, when you can hire a bicycle at the street corner and be in this beautiful country in an hour?

We were now far enough upon

our journey to be overtaken by the most modern curse of road travelling. A hectoring hoot behind you, and almost before you have time to incline to the roadside a great unsightly monster comes scorching past you in clouds of dust, to vanish in the clinging curtain it churns behind it. These are the nightmares of the road, and for a period they follow each other in annoying succession, for this is the batch of motorists who have timed themselves to eat their lunches in Brighton or Eastbourne. Later in the day we were destined to be overtaken by the afternoon trippers, who, having lunched in town, had arranged to dine at the seaside. As one yellow monster flew past us we had the momentary vision of the crouching figure of the driver with his masked face turned to us as he shouted the solitary query "Eastbourne?" Whether he caught our answer or allowed himself time to realise our gesture of assent it is impossible to say, since for the moment we knew no more of him beyond the trail of his oil-scented dust.

The cyclist is far more companionable. He passes you on the down gradients, but you as often as not overtake him at the next ascent; and unless he is a particularly strong wheelman you may hope, if the country be not flat, to have him in your vicinity for several miles. So different from the motor fiend, who falls upon you like a bolt from the blue, and, reckless alike of your comfort

and the temperament of your horse, disappears as rapidly as he came. But it sometimes chances that you meet the motor fiend again. This was the case with the great yellow machine, the driver of which had craved information from us, without rendering the common courtesy of slackening his pace to receive an answer. Later in the afternoon, as we were trotting merrily down a hill, we overtook a melancholy procession. The glory of pace had departed from the monster, and it was content to regulate its progress to the hauling capacity of a heavy Clydesdale bribed from a neighbouring harrow.

"You are going away from Eastbourne!" but the owner of the wounded monster vouchsafed no answer.

"That's a bad break-down," we said, turning to Baker.

"Yessir; back sinew, sir. Comes of going so fast down hard roads."

Another seven miles through the same class of beautiful country brought us to the confines of Surrey, and at Felbridge we crossed the border, and, with our heads turned south, drove into sleepy Sussex. We now saw evidences that we were in the vicinity of some racing-stable, and remembered that we were close to Lingfield. These evidences consisted of a string of thoroughbred horses ridden by diminutive boys. The lean quarters of the animals showed that they were in hard training, and Baker informed us

that there was a race-meeting to be held shortly in the neighbourhood.

We had hardly dismissed the racehorses from our minds when our own good little grey mare began to feel the hill of East Grinstead. As this township was destined to be our halting-place for the main break of the journey, we at once consulted Mr Mogg, in the hope that his editorial efforts might add something for our enlightenment. We find that worthy has the following entry against the North Sussex town:—

"A pleasant town, situated on a hill: on the east side of the main street stands the church, a spacious, handsome building, containing a monument, with an inscription informing us that the church was founded by Richard Lewknor, Esq. of Brambleton, and Katherine his wife, who was one of the ladies to the queens of Edward IV. and Henry VII. At the east end of the town stands Sackville College a large quadrangular building, erected about 1616 by Robert, Earl of Dorset, and endowed with a revenue of £330 per annum for the maintenance of twenty-four aged persons of both sexes, with a separate apartment to each, and a yearly allowance of £8. East Grinstead sends two members to Parliament, and has a weekly market on Thursday, chiefly for corn."

We had had proof that Thursday was still maintained as a market-day, in the several farmers' carts we had passed on the road, loaded for the most part with pigs and calves. Of the antiquities of East Grinstead we had already heard; but our first duty was to make the mare comfortable, for any real pleasure we were

to have that day depended upon our treatment of her.

Up to the present she was going very steadily, and although she had shown no signs of distress, yet it was evident she would need all of the long rest we intended to give her at the half-way house. W., who had knowledge of this part of the world, had suggested that we would find the Dorset Arms suit us admirably. He laid special stress upon the bedrooms, the view from which on a fine day covers a fair expanse of Sussex Weald. W. was satisfied that we should find ourselves obliged to sleep the night at East Grinstead, and was very emphatic on the attractions of this particular inn. And indeed it is an establishment of considerable charm. What a relief to the modern traveller to find himself separated from the thrall of liveried hall-porter and crop-haired Teuton waiter! A hotel without coupons, devoid of lifts and sharks. You walk into the Dorset Arms, attracted by the quaint signboard, which differentiates the hotel from the row of low-eaved and gabled houses which, tumbled together, make the main street of the village. No one greets you; you are just one of the public, apparently of no more account or interest to the service of the hostel than the group of gaitered farmers lounging on the wooden benches in the primitive bar, and shuffling their heavily shod feet with ceaseless energy upon the red-tiled floor.

We shout for the service, in the meantime examining a

strange old print which catches our eye. An unpleasant subject, only rendered tolerable by its antiquity. By dint of complaining we at last attract the attention of a white-capped country maid, and order lunch while we are shown into a tiny sitting-room, the low ceiling of which seems to be but a few inches above our heads. We share this sitting-room with other travellers,—strangers, who by conjecture we believe to be a newly married couple. The genuine antiquity of the surroundings breeds fantasies. Of course the strangers with us, who efface themselves in the corner by the fire, are a runaway couple. He, the clean-shaven gallant, has persuaded the fair, shrinking squire's daughter to fly with him. They have posted fifty miles until they reached the Dorset Arms. The Squire,—have we not the evidence of every Christmas number of the illustrated periodicals?—is hard upon their track. Their own horses are done; they cannot procure fresh ones; there has been a heavy demand on post-horses, we have engaged the last pair. The runaways are at their wits' end; in a moment they will throw themselves on our mercy and crave—he with manly agitation, she with tears—our horses. And—

"I wonder how long it will take that blacksmith to mend the pedal!"

The fantasy fades; it is but a delusive dream bred of the air of antiquity which the hostess has studied to retain in the

surroundings of her inn. Blacksmith—pedals. It was not to mend pedals that the runaway couple of our imagination required blacksmiths. After all, it is 1903, and our strangers are only uninteresting cyclists upon an Easter tour.

A visit to the stables shows us that W. was just in his appreciation of the beauties of the view from the back of the Dorset Arms. A fair prospect of wooded Sussex Weald stretches away for miles, and in the infancy of Spring the tints and greys are of a peculiar softness and attraction. We found Baker in his shirt-sleeves strapping the grey mare.

"She hasn't begun yet!" was the worthy groom's comment on our query as to the mare's welfare. Then out of a dark corner in the stable, from somewhere between the corn-bin and the harness-room, appeared a shrivelled old man,—an oddity in ill-fitting clothes and dilapidated gaiters.

"Morning, sir. You don't 'appen to want a groom!" and the shrivelled caricature made a gesture of respect, something between the jerky salutation of a stable-boy and the military salute of thirty years ago. We expressed regret that we had no occasion for his services.

"Sorry for that, sir, as I am a good man, and there are not many good men left. Besides, times are hard with me. I've come all the way from Birmingham looking for a job."

"On foot?"

"Every yard. You see the 'lectric trams throws the like of me out of work. I've fifteen

years' record as a tram-driver, as my papers will show, and then come along them new-fangled 'lectrics, and they've no more use for tram-drivers in Birmingham. Well, you see, sir, I'm an old soldier. Engineers, sir; driver. No; I never saw any service, sir, except at Chatham. Under Somerset. Soldiers used to work in my day: as I was telling your man here, sir, we weren't coddled as they are nowadays. We 'ad no jam and bacon with our rations, we just 'ad 'ard work, and—why, that there 'Kitchie' was a lieutenant!"

"How old are you?"

"S'welp me, sir, but I am fifty-five to-day. This is my birthday, a pretty sort of birthday without a penny in my pocket!"

We were caught, and a shilling was the penalty. We are always meeting this class of man on his birthday.

"Thank you, sir: nice pony that of yours, sir; pity it has that splint on the near fore. If you'd made it 'alf-a-crown, sir, I wouldn't 'a' noticed that there splint!"

Satisfied that a shilling was the limit of our bounty, the shrunken shell of a man gathered up his bundle of personal property and shuffled out of the stable.

"That's a quaint character, Baker."

"Ain't no character he's got, sir. Always meet them sort on the road."

"But how do they live?"

"Does a job here and a job there; cleans harness or boots

—anything; pitches that yarn to gentlemen. They manages to live well, those kind do."

By this time the grey mare had her nose buried deep in her gruel, and satisfied with Baker's "There ain't nothing wrong with her, sir," we returned to the hotel.

Margaret, the neat little serving-maid, announced that our lunch was waiting for us. We found the dining-room possibly the most fascinating corner in the inn. In the first place, it showed from its windows some of the glories of the Sussex prospect of which W. had warned us. Moreover, the fascinations of its low ceiling, supported and bisected with a crooked joist black with age, was enhanced by the fashion of the furniture in the room. The chairs we sat in were of well-preserved Chippendale—£10 apiece would not have purchased them. One of the finest oak dressers we had ever seen in all our wanderings stood against the wall and served as a sideboard, leaning, as old furniture appears to lean, restfully in its place. In fact, it was evident that the hostess, realising that the old associations of the inn were its main assets, displayed great diligence in maintaining its character of antiquity. Yet there were little incongruities which provoked a smile. Here was a room in which, perhaps, at the beginning of the century just past, the greatest and most distinguished in the land had sat at meat. Here on every hand the memories of these antiquities were sustained, and

peeping from their midst—in fact from between two valuable sporting prints—was a signed photograph of Dan Leno, the modern comedian, and opposite him, in evening dress, my lady his wife.

We would have stayed longer at East Grinstead but time forbade. It is an interesting and beautiful little place, and full of “natural curiosities.” But we had to be away, and at 2.30 Baker brought the trap round, the little mare stepping out as freely as if she had never been out of the stable that morning or pulled leader in a Maple van.

Leaving the Tunbridge Wells Road to our left as we passed through Forest Row, we commenced the descent into the Weald.

The little mare had yet thirty odd miles to go, so we all got out and let her walk slowly up the steeper hills. Consequently we were amply rewarded in the time it gave us to admire the beauties round us. The valley beneath Forest Row stretches away below. It is wooded from end to end. One mass of budding foliage in ever-varying shades, the dark green of the pines contrasting with the tenderer tones of young spring clothing. Here and there the sheen of a feathery birch, glistening in silver seam against the deeper masses, while ever and anon a patch of meadow or park breaks in upon the sea of deeper green with splashes of fresh rich emerald. The nearer detail is even more entrancing. The woods carpeted with anemones and bluebells, the

hedgrows fringed with prim-roses. The whole chequered and blended with the strong rich chrome of gorse in bloom.

It is as wild and beautiful a country as any to be found in the vicinity of London; and certainly when, at Wych Cross, one shuns the Lewes Road and skirts the fringe of Ashdown Forest, a magnificent panorama of English scenery lies before one. From Hindleap Warren almost to Nutley, a distance close on five miles, we have down and common on either side. A lonely road, which only requires a masked highwayman to complete the illusion that we are contemporary with Mr Mogg. Then the road sinks into a cutting through stretches of yellow gorse, and we approach Nutley. The great ridge of Crowborough, with Crowborough Beacon standing paramount, looms up upon our left, and we look down upon the pleasing Weald, with its blue frieze of South Downs to the west, and indefinite horizon to the south-east, which horizon we know to be the English Channel, though the day is not clear enough to differentiate between the haze of mist and blue of seaboard. Crowborough Beacon is a fine sentinel, and Mr Mogg did not escape its influence. In a burst of enthusiastic language he says:—

“The traveller is in some degree compensated by the view obtained from Crowborough Beacon. From the summit of this lofty eminence, which is 804 feet perpendicular height above the level of the sea, a most extensive and beautiful prospect pre-

sents itself: hence the eye ranges to the north-west over the whole of Ashdown Forest, which lies as it were at the feet of the spectator, and thence stretching over a considerable tract of country. The view is terminated by Leith Hill Tower, at the distance of 25 miles; to the north the scene is bounded by Botley Hill in Surrey, with its continued ridge, and the range of hills that extends from near Lingfield in Surrey to Seven-oaks in Kent; to the south-west Ditchling Beacon, near Lewes, and the Sussex Downs terminate the view."

As we pass through Nutley the motor travellers due to dine in Eastbourne begin to pass us. There are no policemen here; the road is good and the gradient is in their favour—they will be in for afternoon tea. Nutley is behind us; and removed from the attractions of Ashdown Forest, we again arrive at an area of private parks and properties. For the most part these are beautiful enclosures, but in many instances their beauties are marred by constant white placards which promise punishment to so-called trespassers. A drive like this and the association with a large expanse of common land breeds a fierce feeling of Radicalism. What right has a single man to pick out the most entrancing spots in this beautiful country, to surround them with wire and paling, and then say no man shall enter here on pain of punishment? Surely it is impossible that the educated masses will suffer this selfishness and egotism. Such an attitude is a relic of feudalism and barbarity. Shall the individual maintain himself within his boundaries to the exclu-

sion of all others, while the masses hustle each other along the narrow strip of yellow roadway? Of course he will. Don't be foolish; you are irritated because five motor-cars passing in rapid succession have left a hanging trail of dust from which you cannot escape. You are no Radical or you would not object to motor-cars.

At the next village the little stone box of a church, with its white-splashed graveyard, stands upon the very edge of the turnpike road. We ease the mare to a walk, as a ceremony has taken place. There is a gleam of surplice as the country parson disappears into the church, and a group of black-clothed village-folk are still standing round the heap of new-turned clay gazing into an open grave. It is a funeral. As we pass, some of those who have assisted are upon the roadway. They are all in black, and two are supporting a man who is weeping bitterly. Grief is written on every face. How we like the country-folk, their feelings are so spontaneous and so strong. We do not know what the bereavement was. It may have been a young wife, or sister, or mother. Whatever it was, the man in front is utterly broken, and no shame attaches to his grief. When one thinks of the mockery of the London hearse, with its complement of hired attendants, the mechanical function, a public cemetery, and the hansom which takes one back to office when the gabbled ceremony is over and forgotten, one can envy the simple folk

their simplicity of thought and action, and their spontaneous feelings.

We were now fairly into the Sussex Weald, bowling merrily along a perfect road towards Uckfield. The weather was still beautiful, and although there was not enough sun to produce the full fragrance of a Spring afternoon, yet the clouded sky and fresh breeze were all in favour of the mare, who had not yet thrown out a single signal of distress. The part of the Weald through which we were now passing is very cramped and wooded. It is a succession of undulations, though the intricacies of the constant labyrinth of hedges, rows, and the scrappy inconsequent coverts, do much to destroy the true topographical nature of the landscape. We are told, as our fathers and grandfathers were before us, that if this country is to be the subject of invasion by a Continental Power, it will be into the Weald of Sussex that the invading forces will hurl themselves. May Providence be with them! for they will want a full measure of its help if their attack formations are really as the English experts would have us to believe. It is not until you have hunted in the Weald that you realise the intricacies of the Sussex country, which is partitioned like a sample-box. Above the plain the Downs stand sentinel over a field of fire which, properly utilised, should mean ruin to any force entangled in the mazelike flats beneath them.

But we have reached Uck-

field, an ambitious village plastered on the inner and abrupt slopes of a valley. It is not a place of great interest, though we could see that the mare felt some disappointment it was not a halting-place. We term the village ambitious advisedly, because Uckfield is in reality an old and sleepy hamlet, which some one is goading on into advancement and progression. We judge of this by the character of the architecture, by the fact that what we heretofore knew as a butcher's shop behind a latticed window has of recent date become a white-tiled *magasin*, a portion of a scheme in commercial buildings surprising in its modern up-to-dateness.

But it is on through Uckfield and away down the yellow road to East Hoathly, our halting-place—the last stage in our journey to the coast. We pass through the well-kept property round Croxted, where the time-honoured Sussex "heave-gate" has been abolished to make room for lofty five-barred barriers, all painted a scrupulous white, possibly with the view that timid sportsmen may be induced to spare their animals the recurring effort of jumping such "well-preserved" timber.

East Hoathly is the tiniest scrap of a typical Sussex village. Neat and clean and white-looking, but, on the whole, uninteresting, after you have passed in the afternoon a dozen like it, which only differ in the merest detail. We make for the King's Head, which in the old coaching days

was a tavern of some repute and importance. Like so many of the old staging inns, it fell upon evil days with the advent of railways, until the innovation of the cycle and motor-car improved the condition of its *clientèle*. Baker took the mare round to the yard to gruel her, while we sought the hospitality of the inn. The only entrance to the front is the tap-room, at the moment in the occupation of two gaitered yokels and a buxom country maid, the latter dispensing the hospitality of the landlord.

"A private room, sir, yes; will you please come this way." And we were led up a most eccentric stairway, and shown into a quaint little box of a sitting-room on the first floor. "Tea?" Of course we could have tea, and the primitive bar-tender whisked away to do our bidding.

The host, or it may be hostess, of the King's Head had evidently been at some pains to furnish and decorate the private room. The moment we stepped into it it seemed familiar to us; the arrangement and upholstering gave evidence of an inspiration not altogether strange. If it had not been for the prospect from the window, with a signboard marking that it was fifteen miles to Eastbourne staring us in the face, we might have been in a Boer *sitkamer* in Prinsloosdorp, or elsewhere in our new provinces. For the most part it has been the dweller in towns who has given his impressions of the Transvaal or Free State

Burgher to the world. He has found them dull, incongruous, and uninteresting in private life. But we who have been bred in the country can see a very remarkable parallel between the farmer Boer and the country-folk of our own villages in the south of England. The same earnest spiritual faith, identical ideas upon household comfort, broad-minded views on personal cleanliness, and a general simplicity tempered with suspicion, which, being the outcome of ignorance, is educated by experience into shrewdness of a peculiar type. The circumstances of their surroundings prevents the two being on "all-fours," but in the raw there are many similarities. In the present instance the portrait of Spurgeon over the mantelpiece and the texts round the wall showed a spiritual temperament which had to make its way to the surface. The crude monochromes of the Royal Family might easily have been Kruger and Steyn. The furniture, purchased *en bloc* on the suite system, and arranged as a wall decoration, while the owners brought in reed-bottomed chairs for general use; the countless family photographs plastered everywhere; the harmonium or piano, whichever it was, standing obtrusively in the corner of the room,—it all brought back a vivid picture of scenes in the late war. And even the obscure family which owned this wayside inn had been interested in that war. But then what family in the British Isles

has not? On the table stood the portrait of a youth in the uniform of the "Duke of Cambridge's Own," the unfortunate unit of Yeomanry which fell into disaster at Lindley. But with tea, the good stock southern English tea, all thought of the Boers was banished. No Burgher household could have produced such a meal. In the matter of food the Boer has no imagination.

One hour and we were on the road again. There was no doubt now that the little mare would carry us the fifteen miles left to our destination without distress. She came away from the King's Head apparently as full of work as she had been in the morning.

"Feed, sir; she just mopped it up!" said the laconic Baker. We were now in familiar country, for my wife and I had hunted with the Eastbourne foxhounds. And four miles on our way, at Horsebridge, we had evidence that one of the last meets of the season had been held in the vicinity. We overtook some of the field trotting their leg-weary way homewards. Some were acquaintances, some strangers, for in this hunt occasional members abound. Then in a parallel lane we caught a glimpse of scarlet setting off the shades of spring green now deepening in the failing light. It was old Brooker the huntsman taking the pack to Hailsham railway-station. A break in the hedge gave us a view of the pack, a splash of white with waving sterna. What memories this evidence of a day's sport could

awaken! Of reckless gallops over the springy yet treacherous Downs. A fortunate "slip away" in the Weald, when with a tricky jumper and attention to business we had often "got away," and been in a "good thing" with Brooker and the few who were knowledgeable, to the exclusion of the less resourceful.

The thought of the Downs reminds us that we are nearing the end of our journey. Crowborough had long disappeared behind us, and on our right front has now risen Firle Beacon and the Lewes hills, a preliminary feature of that portion of the South Downs which leads up to Beachy Head, which Mr Mogg describes as "the most stupendous cliff on the south coast."

Thus we pass through the prosperous little township of Hailsham, not halting to waste our time with acquaintances of the hunt, who, while waiting for their "special" to arrive, are partaking of a high tea in the Railway Hotel. From Hailsham the road turns due south, and we take the one which fringes the Willingdon marshes and leads upon Polegate, nestling beneath a great hogs' back of Down. A little to the right, against another green glacis now growing grey in shadow, we can make out the quaint outline of the Wilmington Giant, the "prehistoric" symbol carved into the turf, which portrays the crude art of some long dead and forgotten race. As we near Polegate we pass a neat country residence, which is pointed out

as the home of a celebrated English jockey. Would not our sporting grandfathers turn in their graves if they were to realise that the stable-boys, to whom they gave a five-pound note for a winning mount, would be succeeded by a generation of jockeys destined to end their days as country squires!

At Polegate we had still an hour of sunlight, and only three miles of our journey left. We soon left this wooded suburb of Eastbourne behind us. Part of our wager had been that the mare should not be unduly urged. She had gone her own pace the whole way, and now she seemed to smell the sea and an end to her labours, for without suggestion on our part she mended her pace and was going "great guns" through Willingdon when the parting of the ways presented the dilemma to us of breasting a long hill or taking the longer route by the new King's Drive adjacent to Hampden Park. Out of consideration for the mare, in order to avoid the hill, we took the lower and longer road, and in a quarter of an hour drew up at the railway-station of the watering-place which 'Pater-son's Roads' thus describes:—

"East Bourne is a fashionable sea-bathing place, situated in a valley almost surrounded by hills, which command a very extensive prospect of the Weald of Sussex. The place consists of four parts; two of which

near the sea, at the eastern and western extremities of the parish, are denominated Sea Houses and Meades: the others are South Bourne and East Bourne, about a mile and a half from the sea. The bathing here is remarkably good, and it has also the advantage of a Chalybeate Spring, the water of which is recommended in the same cases as the Bristol Waters. A small theatre, subscription ballroom, and library may be reckoned among the amusements of East Bourne, which is fashionably attended in the summer months. The church is a handsome edifice. In the months of July and August large flights of birds called wheat-eats are caught here by the shepherds and considered a great delicacy. At Langley Point, about a mile and a half eastward of the village, are two forts; about a mile behind them on an eminence is a battery; and from this point eastwards the coast is defended by martello towers. To the west of East Bourne is Beachy Head, the most stupendous cliff on this coast, being 564 feet perpendicular height, in which are a number of caverns."

We found W. waiting for us at the station. He stepped up to the little grey mare and patted her neck. For the moment he forgot any chagrin he might have felt at the loss of his wager, and in honest appreciation of the quality she had shown exclaimed, "You must have a rare piece of stuff here!"

The mare nuzzled against his hand. W. had aptly described her. She is "a rare piece of stuff"; and she will never pull in the "lead" of a furniture-van again!

L. J.

THE PLEASURE OF ORDER.

As most men keep a few pet nightmares¹ stalled in the windowless stable of sleep, so waking life has its favourites. Firstly, the dread of death remains, religion, philosophy, and weariness of life notwithstanding, the most sickening terror of mankind. The dread of disease comes next, partly because disease is the grim ceremony with which life, with many loathesomely humble genuflections, presents a man to King Death, partly because there is in man a fastidious delight in what may be called his architectural perfection, and it distresses and disgusts him to find that the beautiful chambers of his body are becoming decayed, disorderly, and foul. Then comes the dread of poverty, with its visions of shivering and emptiness, and vistas of lamp-lit streets on rainy nights, all unspeakably woeful to creatures whose loftiest aspirations spring in reality from foundations of warmth, repletion, and repose.

These are the Upas-trees which stand in the forest of life. There is scarcely a man bold enough to breathe freely even in the brightest glades, for fear lest the sun, checkering the grassy floor, should be smiling through branches that are poisonous. If life is a jour-

ney, it is performed with a succession of cautiously drawn sighs of relief. With the traveller foreboding is the inseparable companion of gratitude; the peril which has not yet been met upon the road must still be ahead, that which has been escaped does but people the next stage with horrors like unto itself.

But there are antipathies which, though comparable to none of these, haunt the imagination as constantly, and only less repellently because instead of great trees of dread they are but saplings of dislike. One of these is the fear of disorder. Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown of creation. The Tsar of the animated kingdom roams restlessly through his palace, wishing its splendid walls were thicker, and afraid of the anarchy without. Conscious that he, least of all the animals, is subject to and protected by the laws of Nature, he is terrified at his own liberty, and hastens to enslave himself in a thousand laws of his own making, teasing himself eternally with innumerable devices for preserving his serenity. He is ushered into life by regulation; at his first cry a clerk drowsing in a Government office starts up and takes his pen from behind his

¹ I do not remember to have seen it anywhere remarked how poor is the invention of the spirit who prompts our evil dreams. A man's nightmares, however often indulged in, seem to be but variations of the same "plot," accompanied by the same properties. The images of nightly pleasure, on the contrary, seem infinitely varied, which is curious, in that it is a reversal of the mental practices of the hours of daylight.

ear; the proper conduct of his exit is scheduled, and another clerk endocuments in triplicate his last gasp. Every circumstance of his existence is so bound about with ordinances that he has come to regard the fact of each event, which alone really concerns him, as of less moment than the manner. Nor is this all. Not content with codifying himself, he must codify the universe. He has drawn up a book of rules for the sun, the sea, and the mountains, and is much hurt when they occasionally break them; the flowers bloom as *per* his paragraphs, and veers the wind never so boisterously, it beats at every turn into the unconcerned face of an instrument expressly designed for systematising—nay, for prophesying—such gyrations. All of which proclaims him a creature morbidly devoted to order, and every characteristic he has, great and small, is but a symptom of his craving. The thirst for knowledge, his noblest and most indestructible instinct, arises less from a yearning to learn new facts for their own sake than from a desire to see them in their proper co-ordination with facts already known. An isolated truth, however extraordinary or beautiful, troubles him exceedingly. He cannot put it in his pocket as money, but only as an indefinite promise to pay. It is to him like the peak peering above the clouds to a mountaineer, only a torment until the invisible lower slopes have been examined.

It is this which makes religion to-day as much the uneasiness as the consolation

of mankind. The older and the wiser we grow the more surely is it being borne upon us that the mist which shrouds the base and buttresses of the colossal Truth which has stood out against the sky from all time is impenetrable. Yet infidelity grows less, not greater, every day. In our unending search for order we have discovered an ordered magnificence which takes away the breath of the fool who said in his heart there is no God. But the peak still dreams away up in the blue, and the climber still eats his heart out gazing at the bank of cloud a myriad leagues thick below it.

The unknown, then, is repellent chiefly because it is, so to speak, disorderly, irreducible to the terms of the known, as disturbing as a soldier marching out of dressing with the ranks. It is necessary to our peace to find symmetry in all things, and a general victorious in battle does not receive more honour than the scientist or theologian who fits another tile into its place in the mosaic of knowledge. It may be a whimsical speculation, but it is difficult to dismiss the thought that man is afraid and intolerant of the immense variety of his surroundings. He would like things to be more like each other, so that in comprehending one he might have a reasonable hope of comprehending all. The abrupt hills and valleys of thought appall him, for he can grasp nothing of them but their ungraspable immensity. His ideal surface for the world of knowledge, it may verily be believed, is an unbroken flat,

of a colour comfortable to the eye, of which it is not worth the trouble to spy the remote parts, because they are certain to be exactly like those near at hand. There is little freewill in his continual search for knowledge; like the dram-drinker, his eagerness for his torment is still against his volition; his feverish industry seems to proclaim him the disease instead of the masterpiece of Nature, for to her no work is healthy that can never be completed.

Nor are there wanting hints that we are by no means of a nature so complex and highly evolved as that upon which we flatter ourselves. Our uncouth wonder in the presence of the million wonders of existence resembles too much that of a sight-seeing cottager gaping at the treasures of a palace. We who insist so much on order have no more capacity, perhaps, of appreciating the great Plan than the boor the architecture of the Vatican, and, like Apelles' cobbler, our criticisms are probably of no worth or justice whatever upon anything higher than the boot-latchets of creation. Mercifully, the intimation that his books of rules are all wrong comes, as it has come often, to man too gracefully and gradually to set any one generation grovelling with shame at its presumption. The Almighty is as gentle with the self-conceit of His creatures as with any other of their functions,—as gentle as they themselves have been ferocious to the few who have ventured to overturn too suddenly their clumsy idols. But it is hard to blame too much

the savagery of the world to its Galileos; the persecuted reformers are not the only pathetic figures in the picture. Not without pathos, also, is the mob, which represents a species conscious that order is a necessity of its existence, and alarmed at the disturbance of it by even the innovation of truth. Truth, though the best, is not the only secure foundation upon which to raise a house, fortunately for the world; for were it so, there would be but little building done, and man must have a roof.

There is to-day more need for toleration of those who fight against truth, than as in days past of those who fight for her. To the savage the missionary brings no gentle light into the darkness, but only a glaring torch which will shortly be thrust amongst the old foundations of what his race has from time immemorial regarded as security and order. Wild men who were not cannibals have been known to devour the carcass of the dreaded stranger who had come to disturb their economy, more as a symbol of utter destruction than for the sake of the horrid meal. To savages in their simplicity, even more than to his complicated white brother, order is the very basis of life. The laws of the Zulus and Basutos, for instance, relating to marriage and property, to precedence and family obligations, are amazing in their rigidity and severity. The love of order, then, is not the offspring of civilisation, it is the property of humanity. Laws deal less with the origin

and fate of things than with their proper place in the schema. "Whence" was an interesting word long before Omar Khayyam; it must have been the primeval thought. Mankind still shares the amazement of Adam at his own birth, and his undoubted incredulity as to the birth of Eve. And we ponder much over "Whither," some with shudders, some with the serene smile of trust, but all with brows slightly puckered. But all day and all night the world is asking "Where?" In this place or that place? Before or after that? Number one, two, or three?

It is this instinct which is responsible for one of the commonest pleasures of man, that of dividing his work and thought into "schools," as he long ago divided the works of God into "orders." For this purpose he is ever on the watch for analogies; so that every arrival may be herded in his proper fold. There is no more admired critic or reviewer than he who discovers in every new painter, writer, or thinker a resemblance to some other pre-eminent in the same or even another department. A shepherd is less welcome than another sheep. Thus truth is sorely strained to label Patrick Nasmyth the "English Hobbema"; and how many a sordid ravager of the savings of the poor has strutted as the "Napoleon of Finance." The stranger who cannot be thus likened flutters the doves cots consumedly until it is possible to range him into line. He is the isolated fact, again, a worry, almost an impertinence.

That little gust from Heaven which we call genius, coming like a draught into a room, blows the neatly filed papers of the Schoolmen sadly about.

Another gratification arising out of and ancillary to that in order, is the pleasure of a catalogue, especially of that form of catalogue known as a *catalogue raisonné*, wherein all subjects are not only classed, but classed according to their subjects. Such a document, the ring-fence erected around a group of groups, is the very crystallisation of order. Not an owner of possessions, nor a thinker of thoughts, nor a doer of deeds but loves first to make and then to pore over the pages wherein the medley of his interests stand as easy for inspection as an army drawn up on parade. There is no other reason for the keeping of a diary; the drawing up of an inventory, though it has other reasons, has no other pleasure. And in larger matters history itself is studied chiefly as a *catalogue raisonné* of events, and it is studied so closely because, perspective being a very vital attribute of order, we are much afraid of misproportioning men and things. Beauty, genius, and truth have a hard fight of it in a world which dare not admire them until they are allocated. 'Paradise Lost' cost five pounds, and Millet sat starving in a garret looking at a canvas which was to earn nine hundred thousand francs for some one else. The epic is safe now, it is listed with the 'Iliad'; and should the "Angelus" ever

come to Christie's, all the millionaires in Christendom will contend, like the heroes of Greece and Troy over the arms of Achilles, for the supreme work of the *Barbizon School*.

There is besides a pleasure in order a very real fear of disorder. A mob, a fire, or a runaway horse arouse a sensation of terror in the spectator quite apart from their potentiality of harm to himself. Mere force is not, as is supposed, the last argument of man; a civilised war would have more terrors for the stock-jobber than the cottager were it not for the threat of ungoverned force veiled behind the punctilio of Christian fighting. We are never *quite* certain of an army. The disciplined brigade, which nowadays captures the enemy's capital as tenderly as it would guard its own, has nevertheless the same badges on its buttons as those which were fouled with the rape of San Sebastian and the murder of Bazeilles; it may drown its manners at any moment in a torrent of blood and tears, and statesmen and others never forget the fact. War is but the crust of the volcano; fires of unutterable horror hum beneath; the very perfection of the discipline which controls them is evidence of man's dread of disorder, for it is only fear that welds so strongly the furnace-doors.

Thus we come back again, as all men sitting ruminating at their desks come back always, to the thought of death. For death is the epitome of disorder, the gate into the lawless unknown which is the heritage

of the soul and the supreme terror of the body. The body therefore has but scant comfort in the emancipation of the spirit, its captive. The miracle of heterogenesis by which something more everlasting than the mountains steals into existence hidden in a fatuous seven pounds of pink flesh, more perishable than the linen upon which it struggles,—this miracle stops short at the act of creation, as if astounded at its own daring. There is no further commingling of the material and the immaterial; the body and soul exist as separately as the bottle and the wine inside it; there is no love lost between them; at best they maintain an attitude of detachment, each regarding the fate of the other as that of a stranger; at worst they hate each other, and revolt with the ferocity of despair at each other's unending tyranny. Were all the rest of creation at peace in its place, man would be unable to rejoice because of the quarrelling and confusion going on day and night within the "battered caravanserai" of his own existence. Yet, true to his instinct, he has evolved a rule even from the eternal disorder which vexes him. A law of compensation of his own drawing up, for which there is no authority in the Statute-book of Nature, comforts him with the pronouncement that a noisy tavern can be no home for a being whose chief pleasure is in order. But how terrible would be the hour of closing were there no better evidence of a life to come than the elaborate discomfort of this.

SCOLOPAX.

A GREAT EARTHQUAKE.

BY SIR HENRY COTTON, K.C.S.I.

ON the 12th June 1897 occurred one of those memorable calamities in India which those who lived through it will always speak of with a shudder. I was at that time head of the Government in Assam, with our headquarters at the pleasant little station of Shillong, which lies quiet and peaceful among some of the most beautiful hill-scenery in the world. My wife had only just arrived from England, and had been busy unpacking all her new things and dresses and many home treasures we had never before ventured to entrust to India. We were occupied with preparations for celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, and no thought of trouble crossed our minds. The invitations had been issued for a State ball at Government House, and the residents of the station were engrossed with prospective decorations, festivity, and entertainment. The weather had been wet, but after two days of rain the sun shone out brightly on Saturday afternoon, and all were enjoying themselves in the open air. My wife and I had taken our seats in the dog-cart, and were starting for our usual drive. The reins were in my hand, the groom was adjusting a defect in the harness to which I had called his attention, and other servants were standing about in the porch, according to their custom, to see us off. Without a warning and with no premonitory rumble, which is the ordinary precursor of an earthquake, I heard a clattering on the roof, I felt a swaying of the earth, and the pony I was driving dashed off at full gallop. Amidst a terrific roar of indescribable elements we tore away and missed by a hair's-breadth the wooden railing along the winding drive. I saw the ground yawn open into cracks beneath our feet, the pine-trees overhead shook and trembled as though under the influence of a vast storm, and the pine-cones showered an avalanche on our heads. The Goorkha guard were ready for the salute, and we saw the guard-house crumble like a pack of cards as we approached it. It was more by luck than skill that we escaped a carriage accident, and I stopped the trap about 150 yards from where we started. The affrighted pony was then backing over the railings above a steep slope when I sprung out, and got my wife out I know not how. We could hardly stand. I thought the trees were falling on us, and I rushed with my wife, reeling as we went, to an open piece of grass before the flag-staff, where we threw ourselves on the ground. As I leapt from the trap, I looked back to where Government House had been, and there was nothing but a pillar of red dust from the earth to heaven. We were safe! but what a terrible

moment! The noises of the earthquake, blended with cries of terror, were heard all around, and the shaking of the surface of the earth continued, like the movement of some titanic piece of machinery. Gradually the crisis passed, and comparative silence ensued. My private secretary hurried up from the club, and others followed in quick succession, men, women, and children. Then the rain began to fall, and continued without intermission. Darkness was closing in: we had to find some shelter for the night—Government House was a heap of ruins, not one stone standing upon another, and all the masonry houses of Shillong were in a similar plight. My servants and the Goorkha guard tore away the stones from a fallen out-house in which our camp-equipage was kept, and managed to extract therefrom three servants' tents, which were rapidly pitched and afforded a refuge. Kindly Samaritans whose houses had not been so completely wrecked as ours found us some food. We remained huddled up, ten or twelve in each of these small tents, that night.

In the meantime I had been able to visit parts of the station. It was a scene of deplorable desolation and distress. The secretariat press was full of workmen when the building fell in on them. Fatigue-parties of sepoys were employed all night in endeavouring to rescue those who were entombed and might be still alive. It was a ghastly spectacle to witness the dead dragged forth, and the pallid

staggering forms of the survivors. The gallant little Goorkhas worked indefatigably, amid drenching rain and depressing darkness and earth-tremors, which were incessant throughout the night. Mr Robert Blair M'Cabe, Inspector-General of Police, and an officer of conspicuous distinction, was found dead, horribly crushed and buried in the ruins of his house. "*Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit nulli flebilior quam mihi.*" I shall never forget his funeral the next day. We laid him in a sheet and carried him through a tornado of rain to his grave, stumbling over the fallen cemetery wall—a tragic close to a career of the most brilliant promise! The great embankment which closed in the beautiful Shillong lakes had collapsed, the water had poured down a ravine, and damming up the river below had destroyed an iron bridge, carrying the heavy girders a considerable distance up-stream. The native bazaar was in ruins. The jail, with all other public buildings, had fallen, and the panic-stricken prisoners spent the night in the open. Such was the fear on them that not one attempted to regain his freedom. It was only a small section of the English community who were in the Government House grounds: most sought such shelter as they could find in the wooden cricket-ground pavilion, which had not subsided, and in sheds in the bazaar; others were in their mat-walled stables or coach-houses. The position of all,

and especially of delicate ladies and children exposed to the elements, was a most pitiable one. All had their stories of horror to narrate. Some were out riding, some bicycling; some were walking and fell to the ground, clinging from tree to tree for protection; a set were playing lawn-tennis when the court crumbled away under their feet; others were golfing, and fell prone on the links; a family saved themselves by rushing out of the house and rolling down the steps; the inmates of the club just escaped by tumbling out of doors. Women were crying that the Day of Judgment had come. It was no disgrace to the boldest of men to turn pale, or for the nerves of the strongest to be unstrung. There was little sleep that night: the earth was in a constant tremor, and ten minutes did not elapse without a definite specific shock, with its subterranean rumble and the clattering of the fallen corrugated iron roofs among the adjacent ruins. We kept up a bonfire until the morning, which was fed with shattered furniture and the broken wood-work of the house. Above all, there was the anxiety for others, for the world outside, which was not relieved until eight days had passed.

The immediate result of the catastrophe was a houseless population, without any change of raiment for day or night, exposed to the fury of the tropical rains, destitute of food, and many of them terribly wounded, crushed, or dying. The most urgent need was to

house the houseless, to feed the people, and to restore communications. My officers showed admirable presence of mind and laboured unceasingly. There was no hesitancy or faint-heartedness on the part of any one. Temporary huts were run up in a few days, and a loan was offered from the Treasury to the bazaar merchants, with a view to importing grain. Looting, which had prevailed somewhat extensively on the night of the earthquake, was prevented. One of the earliest measures I took was to assign to every officer his own especial duty in repairing damages and restoring confidence. Every officer, whatever his ordinary duties, was made available for the task of rendering assistance. An examiner of accounts was set to remove ruins, forest officers and accounts officers were employed in clearing the roads, the officers of the regiment supervised the work of their sepoya in building huts, magistrates became foremen of coolie gangs, and my assistant secretary was turned into a most efficient conservancy overseer. Every man was placed at his post, and all worked with their might. Of the native staff also I can speak in the highest terms: although their own losses were great, they devoted themselves to the public service unremittingly and without complaining. It was due to their co-operation with the unwearying efforts of my chief secretary, and to that officer's power of organisation, that the records were salvaged with little loss, and that current work was promptly resumed.

Not a single table or chair came out unbroken from the wreck of the secretariat, and yet within ten days from the earthquake the office establishment was dealing with current cases. Above all, the civil surgeon of the station and the deputy commissioner—both of whom, I am glad to say, afterwards received a decoration for their services—never spared themselves, and in season and out of season were continually at work, encouraging others and setting an example to every one by their sense of duty and self-devotion. After the first urgent need of shelter had been met, the task of reopening communications was immediately taken up. Telegraphic connection had been destroyed. The abutments of bridges had been shaken to pieces, and the superstructure had collapsed. Several miles of road had gone down the hillside, all roads were cracked and fissured, both longitudinally and laterally, and great chasms thirty feet in depth yawned out in some places. Portions of the road were buried by huge landslips. It will help to illustrate the force of the shock when I say that all the stacks of metal on the roadside were levelled, as though the metal had been spread by hand. The difficulty of re-establishing communications was enormous. It could be overcome but gradually, but it was done in a manner reflecting the highest credit on the engineers of the Public Works department.

Assam is well known as a region of seismic disturbance, and earthquakes before this

were not uncommon; but they have never been known on any previous occasion to cause widespread destruction. The area over which this earthquake was felt is prodigious. It was estimated on scientific official authority to have extended over a tract of country 1500 miles in length and 1000 in width, or about 1,275,000 square miles. The area over which the shock was destructive is believed to be unique, and the focus from which it radiated was in the neighbourhood of Shillong. The earthquake was said by the Japanese expert, who was specially sent by his Government to inquire and report, to be due to a fault in the earth's crust about twenty miles below the surface, and to be non-volcanic, and thus of different type from those great cataclysms which have taken place at Krakatoa, in Japan itself, and more recently in the West Indies. The character of the shock was everywhere much the same, though varying in degree—a sharp vibration, accompanied by a rocking or heaving of the earth and a loud rumbling noise. In the hills gigantic landslips plunged mountain-sides in ruin, and buried villages beneath them. On the plains the rivers were agitated, the water rising to a height of many feet; the banks crumbled and fell in, plunging whole hamlets into the stream; in many places geysers leapt forth, spouting up sand and innumerable jets of water, like fountains playing. This ejection had such force that the covers of wells

solidly embedded in mortar were hurled aside, while the wells were choked with sand. I have seen the heavy wooden cover of a well which was cast thirty feet distant, where it lay half buried in the sand. I have seen a large native bazaar which sank and was embedded in six feet of sand. I have seen huge fissures sixteen feet deep, as many wide, and about a mile long. I have seen deep rivers completely silted up; and in one place, where there had been a crystal pool forty feet deep, and a noted place for fishermen, I was able to cross without wetting myself above the knees. In many places I have seen embanked roads which had subsided to a level with the adjacent country.

It is difficult to define the duration of the great shock; but I do not think it lasted for more than three minutes, and the period of extreme intensity was probably limited to about thirty seconds. But this half-minute's disturbance of the earth's crust was sufficient to cover it with ruins. The fall of Government House, the largest building in Shillong, must have been complete within five seconds. But after the great disturbance definite shocks were incessant for two or three days, and the earthquake went on continuously for a somewhat longer period. In Shillong itself it was estimated that there were two hundred shocks a-day for a few days after the 12th June: these had gradually diminished to twenty or thirty shocks a-day by the middle of July.

Then they became fewer; but for at least two years after the earthquake we were accustomed to a daily shock. Occasionally these were of alarming intensity, but familiarity led to their being treated with contempt. Shocks had become rare when I left Assam at the end of April 1902; but I may safely estimate that we acquired an experience of three or four thousand quakes. The Japanese professor had been good enough to explain to us that these after-shocks were merely the residual effects of the first big disturbance, subject to definite laws, and had nothing dangerous in their character; in fact, that they were absolutely necessary in the ordinary course of things, as by their means the disturbed earth's crust was gradually settling itself into its final stable position, and that each after-shock meant the removal of one residual weak point. We never minded them much, and they became an accustomed element in the routine of life.

It was most fortunate that the earthquake occurred, when it did, in the afternoon, when nearly everybody after a wet day was out of doors. Had it occurred at almost any other time—and it is needless to say that if it had happened at night—the mortality would have been terrible. As it is, one of the most remarkable features of a disaster so overwhelming and so widespread is the comparatively small number of deaths which it occasioned. The ascertained deaths numbered 1542—a figure below the

truth, as it was impossible at a season of floods and downpours of rain to collect complete returns: these were practically all due to falling houses, slipping mountain-sides, and the collapse of river-banks; in a few cases boats were swamped and the occupants were drowned. Two cases were recorded of persons having been swallowed up by the earth opening under them—as in the earthquake which swallowed up Korah, Dathan, and Abiram—but I cannot personally vouch for these: nowhere does the earth gape open and close again. The earthquake deaths were, however, immeasurably exceeded by the mortality from the epidemics that ensued. In Shillong, where there was a temporary but complete dislocation of the water-supply, cholera, dysentery, and fever broke out in the native quarter, and much sickness, including the dreaded enteric, laid many low in the cantonments and civil station. The connection between earthquakes and epidemic disease is a medical question of some obscurity; but I believe that in Europe, America, and Japan this connection has been scientifically traced. Certain it is that in Assam there was the most appalling sickness throughout the province during the autumn of the earthquake year, thousands and tens of thousands died from the most malignant form of fever, and the general mortality of the year was over fifty per mille, or almost as high as that which prevailed in the regions of India where famine was then raging. It was the

most unhealthy year of which there is any record.

The population at large, although completely cowed at first by the effects of such an unprecedented phenomenon, very soon displayed their usual calmness and patience, and resumed their cultivation as though nothing had happened. The catastrophe was one which principally affected the few wealthy and well-to-do persons who reside in masonry buildings. The poor, who live in mat-huts, did not suffer so directly from the shock itself. Tea-plantations were damaged in some places, but this great industry escaped as a whole without serious injury. The losses sustained by the Province were, however, immense. The finances of the administration were paralysed by the necessity of restoring public works to their former condition, and the dial of progress was set back. The most permanent and disastrous consequence was more wide-reaching, and consisted in the raising of river-beds and the obstruction of drainage channels. It so happened that the rainfall that year was terrific, and I witnessed from the foot of the hills at Cherrapunji a downpour of eighty inches in three days. The little railway there was swept away, and though every effort was made to repair it, it was ultimately abandoned. The river-beds had silted up, the whole country was covered with sand, and the floods found no other way of escape than over the surface of the fields. The beautiful orange-groves which are so marked a feature

of this tract were a sea of ruin. From the same cause the floods in the Assam valley rose to a height far exceeding any previous record. When I visited the town of Barpeta I found the inhabitants all living on platforms and in boats. Cattle were perishing from starvation, and dead bodies were floating about. Dogs and ponies were skeletons. I rescued one miserable pony which was lying in water with its head only on dry land, and had not strength to raise itself. The police guard of honour to receive me was drawn up on the roof of a boat, which was serving as a treasury and jail and guard-room. The magistrate's court, his residence, and the circuit-house were up to their eaves in water, and the shops in the bazaar and all private houses were in the same condition. Everywhere we found that the river-beds had upheaved, so as to be almost on a level with the surrounding country. There were no natural outlets for the water to run off. These excessive floods were directly due to this cause, and even after the lapse of years the old channels have not been properly scoured out or new channels formed. Many village sites became, therefore, uninhabitable, and the people were forced to move to other places, and a great decrease of cultivation followed in what had once been a very fertile country.

The great earthquake was indeed a great calamity. May I be allowed to say that it was bravely met? Indians vied with Englishmen in their zeal. The following encomium was passed on the native Assamese magis-

trate of Barpeta, the place to which I have just referred: "Placed single-handed as he has been in this isolated town, among a population thoroughly terrified and full of prophecies of approaching dissolution, he has never lost heart; but by the cheerful disposition with which nature has endowed him, has been of much comfort to the subordinate officials and traders, and has carried on the routine duties of his charge without interruption."

I would make this eulogy a general one. The flag of Great Britain never ceased to fly on the Government House flag-staff, in the centre of wreck and ruin. It was the token of the spirit by which all my officers were animated. Everything that could be done by them was done quietly, effectively, and as promptly as possible. There is now little or no local trace of the catastrophe. Houses, public buildings, churches, and jails have been rebuilt; the station of Shillong is more beautiful than it ever was before; the roads and bridges are better than the old ones; the whirligig of official changes has transferred from the province most of those who bore the brunt of the shock; the earthquake is forgotten. But there are men and women on whom it has indelibly impressed its memory, and I venture to hope that I have roused in the minds of the readers of this narrative some conception of the magnitude of the disaster, and some admiration for the energy and resource which were displayed in mitigating its consequences.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

ROYAL PROGRESSES—KING EDWARD'S VISIT TO PARIS—THE Demeanour OF THE Parisians — THE RESULTS OF A CEREMONIOUS EMBASSY—DEEDS, NOT WORDS—LORD MILNER'S ACHIEVEMENT IN AFRICA—A SLIM BOER—MR HENLEY'S "SONG OF SPEED."

ONCE upon a time, when London was further remote from the distant provinces than it is to-day, our kings and queens were wont to go upon progresses. They visited the universities, where they listened with what patience they might to the sorry humours of a Latin comedy, or they added a legendary dignity to some great country house. Thus they kept alive the fire of patriotism, which might have been extinguished for lack of fuel. For in the days when there were no newspapers, and the craft of photography was not yet invented, a sovereign could only make himself known to his subjects by his actual presence. So he visited with royal pomp his distant lieges, and kept them, who might otherwise have been uncertain under which king they lived, faithful to the throne. But to-day there is no need of progresses. Our King and Queen are familiar not only to every inhabitant of the three kingdoms, but to the solitary backwoodsman or the lone islander of the Pacific. The fierce light which beats upon the throne now incoits a cinematograph, while the illustrated papers take care that the acts of no monarch shall go unrecorded. Thus it is that sovereigns, released from the

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instant necessity of travelling always within their borders, may travel abroad and carry messages of peace to foreign countries. They may conduct the pleasantest and most ceremonious of embassies; and they may not only secure to themselves the good-will of other nations, they may increase the happiness and prosperity of Europe.

Never was a monarch more wisely inspired than was Edward VII., when he determined to visit France. For many years the two countries, which are not merely close neighbours but are bound by a permanent alliance of the arts, have been torn by foolish dissensions. Neither side has been without blame, and if we were asked to explain the foolish quarrel we should attribute it to an obstinate desire on the part of journalists and others to mind other people's business. But whatever the cause, the feeling has long been bitter—more especially in France, whose natural dislike of all foreigners is easily fanned to a flame of hatred. Yet we should always have been wiser to discount the insolence of Paris. We might have remembered that the language of polemical discussion is consistently violent on the other

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side of the Channel, and have refused, when we were charged by our neighbours with the habitual commission of all the crimes, to mistake a display of rhetoric for a grave indictment. However, the little humour which might have corrected many errors of style and taste was lacking, and there is no doubt that for the last ten years France has indulged her traditional enmity for England with more than her traditional virulence and rancour.

Then, suddenly enmity is turned to friendship, and amiability smiles, where but yesterday hatred scowled and jeered. The King of England has visited Paris, and in three days has won the sympathetic admiration of the people. For him, indeed, the visit was a personal triumph, and whatever benefit comes from it to London or to Paris must be frankly ascribed to his tact and address. But in these matters it is idle to conceal the truth, and it may be plainly stated that the newspapers of both countries pitched their note of applause a little too high. For our part, we saw at the outset little of the enthusiasm described in an eloquent press. The reception of the King in Paris seemed to us dignified, of course, but a trifle cold. With the memory fresh in our minds of the rapturous folly inspired by the progress of the Tzar, we could not but look upon the procession along the Champs Élysées, in which Edward VII. and M. Loubet took part, as a model of discretion. From the

spectacular point of view, it possessed the beauty which Paris imparts to the least of her fêtes. The chestnut-trees were all a-bloom, and the dragoons descended from the Place de l'Étoile in a blaze of glory. But the crowd was rather curious than emotional. There were but few cheers, and the cries which were heard were not wholly sympathetic. Yet from the very beginning the King impressed Paris with his courage and affability. For let it not be supposed that it needs no courage to drive through a city whose friendship is all uncertain. Two years ago an Englishman wandering on the boulevards had a good chance of being assailed as a bandit; and at every street-corner you might hear the shout of *à bas les Anglais*. Now an English King has shown to all the citizens that he is determined to win their sympathy, and to prove his own confidence in their sense of hospitality. And presently the inevitable comparison was hinted on all sides. When the Tzar visited the capital of his great ally, he could not conceal his timidity. He drove to the Opera furtively in a closed and guarded carriage. But Edward VII., despising precaution, intensified at each of his public appearances the impression of trust and nonchalance. So as the hours passed his popularity increased, especially with the people. The Royalists and Nationalists, all those, in fact, whose policy is aristocratic, preserved a certain reticence, lest any cheers which

they raised might be shared by M. Loubet. But the people, which is indifferent to parties, soon made a hero of Edward VII., and packed the streets through which he drove, and gazed with a growing appreciation, until at last you felt that in a few more days he would have carried all the suffrages.

Paris is a city dominated by its cries, which are, indeed, an unerring index of its opinions and fancies. On such an occasion as a visit of state these cries are sternly controlled by the police; and the best cartoon of the week depicted a policeman, with upraised truncheon, charging the crowd, and shouting in aggrieved patriotism, "Where is the scoundrel who cried '*Vive la République*'?" But in spite of the police the crowd now and again gave utterance to its own sentiments, and proved clearly enough that, even as its appreciation increased, it had not surrendered to the wild enthusiasm which dominated it at the time of the Russian fêtes. It was still master of itself, still proud of its own inheritance. The cry that was most often heard, both at the King's entry into Paris and at Vincennes, was "*Vive l'Armée!*" which, it must be remembered, is the watchword of a party as well as an expression of military pride. Now and then you heard "*Vive le Roi!*" shouted severally and without perfect conviction; nor was it impossible to resist the conclusion that Edward VII. was received as a guest to whom all honour should be paid, but who was

not, like the Tsar, an ally as well as a guest.

So much may be said to correct a too hasty impression. But when we analyse the behaviour of Paris, we find nothing that is not at once gratifying to our national pride and full of hope for the future. That King Edward VII. turned the frigid curiosity of the *badauds* into a dignified friendliness is but another proof of his conspicuous skill; and the demeanour of our neighbours, based upon reason rather than upon sentiment, is a guarantee that the new friendship, thus loyally inaugurated, will not instantly be forgotten. Truly a great change has taken place: beneath the trees of the Champs Élysées, within the stately walls of the Théâtre Français, have been heard the strains of "God Save the King"—the first time in how many years!—and this unwonted music symbolises a definite *rapprochement*. But until the nation can profit, as it should, by the enterprise of its king, it must understand what this *rapprochement* means.

To exaggerate its importance is to make it speedily of no effect. And it is as well to explain at the outset that the tie which at present unites England and France is in no sense political. On neither one side nor the other is there any question of alliance. Maybe, if disputes arise between the two countries, they will be the more easily settled, because both France and England have given signs of a growing friendship. But in other respects we are as we were a month ago.

There is nothing so misleading nor so dangerous as the politics of feeling. Interest, and interest alone, is the proper basis of an alliance, and the interests of France and England conflict no more and no less to-day than they did before the King visited Paris. Three years ago a sentimental bond united France and America. Statues of Washington and Lafayette were presented by enthusiasts from the New World to the city of Paris. The Stars and Stripes mingled pleasantly with the tricolour, and in six months the statues remained and all else was forgotten. If, then, we are to make the most of our new friendship, we must avoid the error of exaggeration. As we have no intention of helping France in her schemes of revenge, so we do not ask her to aid us in the far East. We suggest no more than that two neighbours should live together in amity and understanding. Even when the public peace is assured, there is a private peace, which is too often and too easily broken. Yet there is no reason for quarrelling, if we leave out certain difficulties of temper and temperament, and inculcate on either side a habit of reticent forbearance.

The reasons, outside the domain of politics, which support a closer union between France and England are many and various. The increase of trade which will follow an increased friendship is recognised by both the Chambers of Commerce. But by how much a friendly Paris will increase the pleasure of life

is known only to those who are familiar with both capitals. France is our nearest neighbour, separated from us by a brief hour — a brief hour, too often, of pestilent weather. And there is a lightness in her air, a gaiety in her life, which has an instant effect upon our spirits. Thackeray, who was at home in both countries, said he never landed at Calais without feeling that a load was taken from him, and how many are there to agree with him? To cross the sea to France is not only to change the sky but to change the mind. The most obstinate misanthrope is melted to kindness by an amiable people, which understands all the arts, including the art of life. And for some years the pleasure of a sojourn in France has been marred by a feeling of irritation. We cannot take our ease with perfect composure if we are condemned all the while to accept kindness from an enemy. Even though the French, with a natural politeness, concealed their dislike, we knew perfectly well that it was there, and felt a natural embarrassment. But at last the dislike is abolished or mitigated, and we shall now land at Calais with no thought but of our own enjoyment.

But there is also an artistic reason why England and France should live at peace. Different as the two nations are by temperament, they have for many centuries pursued the same aims in literature and in the other arts. Now we have been the borrowers; now the

French have acknowledged a welcome obligation. But ever since Chaucer found his measures in France, the friendly interchange has been uninterrupted. Germany pursues the arts along her own roads. Italy and Spain, while owing something to France, preserves each its own character. Russia dominates Europe, in literature at least, by the force of a savage soul finding its own needs and its own voice. But France and England have obeyed the same traditions, and loyally striven to reach the same goal. There has not been a great writer in France who has not captured a double audience, and though English literature travels more slowly than French, it is nowadays appreciated sometimes at more than its true worth by the writers of France. If the French admit the beauty of our verse, we are always ready to admire the exquisite lucidity of their prose, and to delight in the wit, in whose expression they have greater licence than ourselves. And what pleasanter tie can bind two nations than this tie of equal tastes and exchanged enthusiasm? Is it not far better than many documents, signed and sealed, whose contents may always be ignored under the stress of politics? Does it not give to all who will master a foreign tongue another life of the intelligence? And shall we deem any embassy superfluous which tightens these silken cords of friendship?

As in literature so in the other arts. In painting and

sculpture we are willing to yield France the first place, and to follow her as pupil follows master. But even here we like to think that we are but taking back (with interest) what we gave, and to remember that our own painters, too, had their influence upon the great Romantic Movement. Thus we are bound to France by similarity of tastes and community of interests. Nowadays, when most men have two languages, the barriers of speech are lightly crossed, and there is no reason why, to the intelligent of both countries, France and England should not be one. There is no reason; but one there was—of ill-feeling and misunderstanding — now happily removed, and removed by the tact and courage of King Edward. Thanks to his enterprise and affability, his perfect understanding of ceremony, his instinctive sense of the manner in which a great king presents himself to a friendly people, we are opening a new chapter in the history of our relations with France; and though the French and English are not more likely to fight side by side now than heretofore, the ties of amenity which unite the two countries have indubitably been strengthened.

The pledges of friendship thus interchanged between France and England cannot be matched within our own borders. The Government is assailed on all sides with a persistence which does not find full warrant in its policy. Its

more unruly supporters have made up their minds that it can do no right, and having clamoured for our withdrawal from the Baghdad railway, have received Mr Balfour's announcement of that withdrawal with a sort of contempt. This shows a factious spirit, and proves, as we have already pointed out, that a large majority is not an unmixed blessing. Now, to well-considered criticism we would make no objection. The cave of army reformers has abundantly justified its existence. It has wrung a belated regret from Mr Brodrick, who at the Royal Academy surprised his audience with an apology, and it will doubtless be justified by another and a sounder scheme of Army Reform. But opposition that is frivolous may result in ultimate disaster. A persistent girding against the Government may force an "alternative" minority upon the country, which no dweller in a cave would view with equanimity. It is therefore pleasant, in the face of ill-judged chatter, to turn from words to deeds, from policy to administration, and with the echo of the House of Commons in our ears, to contemplate what is being achieved in our lately acquired provinces. Even if the debates in Parliament destroy something of our pride in our country, we may easily recover it by reading the Blue-Book lately presented to both Houses by command of his Majesty. For in this unpretentious report Lord Milner gives an account of what has been done in Africa since the war. Here, indeed, is no matter for controversy—only a record of land reclaimed, of colonists resettled, of atonement made for the ravages of warfare. The problem which faced Lord Milner and his colleagues was not an easy one. Peace came in winter upon a country stripped of crops, stock, inhabitants, and dwelling-houses. The Governor was intrusted with a unique task. He had to accommodate not only the conquerors but the conquered. To bring back the prisoners of war, to restore the country population to its homes, to maintain this population until it was once more equipped for earning its own living, to establish new settlements both for indigent Burghers and for the British who had served in the war, to estimate the losses sustained by Dutch and English, to restore the old Uitlanders to their towns, to revive industries, and to import stock,—these were some of his tasks; and it is impossible to reflect that they are all in course of performance without remembering the energy and justice which distinguish our British policy. Now, these achievements are beyond the range of party politics. The end at which Lord Milner aims is kept in sight by friends and foes alike, and in reaching it the statesman, whose business it is to make the future of South Africa, has shown no favour, has revealed no preference. And, first of all, we cannot but be struck by the patient consideration which

England has shown to those who were lately opposing her in the field. By the terms signed at Vereeniging 33,000 persons were restored to liberty, and it will easily be understood that the liberation of so vast an army was not a simple matter. But the work of repatriation was performed without mishap, and now the only prisoners of war who remain in our hands are the 900 who refuse to take the oath of allegiance. Towards these men our responsibility is surely at an end. If we landed them on the friendly shores of Holland or Germany, our duty would be amply discharged. But it is not thus that Lord Milner interprets his functions, and even now the Government has despatched emissaries to India, Ceylon, and Bermuda, who shall interview the irreconcilables, and prove to them that, under proper conditions, they will be welcomed back to their own land. This amiability seems to us excessive. While the South African war was in progress, the Russians were kind enough to criticise with some bitterness our conduct of hostilities. And we cannot help contrasting our generous treatment of a beaten foe, a generosity which includes an embassy of explanation, with Russia's infamous persecution of Finland, a province which hitherto has wisely governed itself, and which in civilisation is centuries ahead of its unscrupulous oppressor.

But what amazes us most in Lord Milner's report is the ingenuity wherewith existing

difficulties have been turned to excellent account. When the National Scouts and ex-Burghers who had fought for the British were restored to the land, there was a reasonable fear of trouble, especially for those who were "bywoners," that is, poor whites, living and working upon other men's land. Either the landowners would not take these "bywoners" back, or if they were permitted to return, they were exposed to insult or boycotting. "To meet the difficulty," says Lord Milner, a plan was devised to collect "ex-military Burghers" of the poorer class upon a certain number of farms capable of closer cultivation, which were either owned or hired by wealthier men in political sympathy with them, or at least not bearing them any grudge. This plan had two advantages. It protected the "ex-military Burghers" socially, by bringing a number of men of the same sympathies together. And it was also sound economically, for it helped to turn men of the "bywoner" class from comparatively useless loungers upon large pastoral farms, where most of their time was wasted in doing nothing, into peasant farmers on land suitable for agriculture, where, given some security of tenure, they only needed industry and perseverance greatly to improve their economic position, and at the same time to benefit the country.

The scheme succeeded admirably so far as the National Scouts were concerned, but it did more than this. Long be-

fore the war the "bywoners" had been one of the pests of South Africa. Already the wealthy farmers had grown tired of the "poor whites," who hung about for a job and a pittance. Had there been no conflict the problem of the "arme boeren" would still have clamoured for solution. And here it was solved incidentally by the governor of a conquered province. The plan invented for the boycotted scouts was adapted to the needs of other "poor relations," with perfect success. "Several thousand landless men," says the report, "who would otherwise have drifted into the towns, are at this moment working hard as agriculturists under conditions of security they have never yet enjoyed, and with good prospect, not only of maintaining themselves, but of gradually acquiring a small capital." And thus it is that Lord Milner's report is a report of action. We read of mealies planted, of farms restocked, of instruction given in agriculture, of new ploughs introduced, of the thousand things which are the better worth doing because they have not the remotest touch with political controversy. There are many wiser things in the world than talking, and if the rulers of South Africa have been asked to discharge duties which do not often fall to the lot of statesmen, it is comforting to reflect that they have not fallen below the occasion, but have proved that even the details of a farmer's business have an importance for them.

And then, to show the variety of the questions which await an answer, comes Sir Godfrey Lagden's dissertation upon the influence of the war on the natives. Though they were not belligerents, the natives were profoundly affected, and while they were hopeful for the success of the British arms, they are woefully disappointed at the result. They fondly believed that the defeat of the Boers meant their extinction, and they expected to be given the choice of the farms of the conquered. By this they are undeceived, and are doubtless wondering at the trustful simplicity of the conquerors.

But many races and many methods of thought must be reckoned with in Africa. Nor is the slimness of the Boer character the least difficulty wherewith we are confronted. To understand a good man or a bad man is easy enough; but who shall fathom the cunning of the half-wise and half-wicked? Such a book as Mr Blackburn's '*Burgher Quixote*' (Blackwood) is, indeed, a luminous commentary upon the hardship of our task. Who can cope confidently with the sly cunning of such a man as Sarel Erasmus, the central figure of Mr Blackburn's admirable story? Now Sarel is the incarnation of slimness. Though he is but eight-and-twenty, he has already been a public prosecutor, and made what he could out of a skilful administration of the law. "Sarel," said his father, "there is a lot of money in the law. I know, because I put it there." And

presently when the war broke out the ingenious Sarel worked hard in the field-cornet's office, hoping that his education would save him from being sent on commando. This he by no means desired, for, said he, "I could not find it in my heart to go and shoot English after the kindness I received in Natal." But to make assurance sure he obtained a certificate from the district surgeon saying that he was suffering from an internal complaint. Yet his cunning availed him nothing. Though the doctor cheerfully certified that he was a dying man, Katrina, the woman whom he was to marry, pushed him, as he said, "into danger and wrong-doing." With her own hand she filled in the form ordering him to join the commando under his old enemy, Ben Viljoen, and poor Sarel found himself a soldier.

Henceforth, in his own words, "he is a Don Quixote, fighting on behalf of Great Britain against the folly and ignorance that have caused such loss and suffering." So he falls in with a magnificent scoundrel called Andries Brink, under whose instigation he gets a command, holds up a convoy, steals the cattle, plunders houses, consistently shows the white feather, and recounts even his worst misdeeds with an amiable satisfaction. Now the book, which is written without the smallest touch of bitterness, is proof enough that Lord Milner has to deal with "slimness" of a very special sort. Men like Sarel Erasmus, who are clever

enough to hoodwink Joubert and Viljoen, will easily deceive the British officials who are sent to govern them. And the worst is that, being unconscious humourists, they prefer to turn their very great gift of cunning to the worst possible account. All these things are clearly presented in the 'Burgher Quixote,' a book which, nevertheless, we value more for its admirable qualities than for the interesting facts which it sets forth. In the first place, it is a model of irony, simple and sustained. Nowhere is there any faltering, nor any forgetfulness of the method employed. And how great this achievement is will be understood if we consider the few ironists that our literature may boast. To the ironist one temptation is constant: he becomes so earnest in his desire to prove his point that he drops into argument, or even into morality. Of this cardinal sin Sarel Erasmus is always guiltless. He never knows, what is patent to the reader from the first page, that he is a sorry scamp. He preserves from beginning to end the beautiful appearance of simplicity, which makes the most dastardly of his actions seem respectable. It is true that Mr Blackburn had already shown how great is his power of satire. But his 'Burgher Quixote' will manifestly increase his reputation, and we recommend this masterpiece of irony to our readers, not merely because it will teach them a profound lesson of South Africa, and show them the reverse of the medal which has for its obverse

Lord Milner's report, but because it is packed with amusement, and prompts a smile with every page.

We are not the warmest champions of motor-cars. Speed is not our deity, and we hesitate to applaud the enterprising gentry who find their greatest happiness in rushing at a prohibited pace from one end of the country to another. But we are now ready to confess that the motor-car has not been invented in vain. It has found its poet. In brief, Mr Henley's "Song of Speed" (D. Nutt) amply atones for much racket and discomfort. It is original, for it deals with material which no poet has ever touched. It is brilliant, for every phrase in it is felt, every image it depicts is seen. It is as rapid as "this astonishing device, this amazing Mercedes"; it carries you through a unique experience, as though you were seated in a sixty-horse car; it paints you the country flashing past, as only an artist can paint it. Everything is appropriate to the subject—metre, phrase, and metaphor. The poem is written in the short, swift measure, already familiar

to us in the "Song of the Sword," and Mr Henley, for all the variations which he makes, never loses sight of his theme: "Speed, speed, in the Fear of the Lord." Lucky is the poet who can discover a new note! Luckier still is he who can strike the new note to a new harmony! Before the poet, inspired with speed, all the world rushes past, and he sees

"Smoke, Rain, and Mist
In their subtle, fantastical
Moodiness; Gardens
And Woods in their pleasure,
Their pride of increase,
And their helpless and sorrowful
Pomp of decay!
Lust, the grey Sea,
The Antient of Days,
With his secret as new
After thousands of years
As it was to the old,
The alert aboriginal
Father of Ships,
And Speed!
Speed you conjure
With a crook of your finger;
Speed which your touch
On a core, on a master-bit,
Breeds for your use;
As Man's hand on a tiller
Gives brain to a boat."

That as well as any other passage will give you a taste of Mr Henley's poem, which he alone could have written, and which only a modern occasion could have inspired.

HOME DEFENCE.

BY A STAFF OFFICER.

AMONG many important concessions that have been wrung from the Government during the last few months, not the least has been a verbal acquiescence with the view that the land defence of these islands may be safely trusted to what are generally, but somewhat loosely, termed the auxiliary forces—that is to say, the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers. It is the object of this article to trace out to their logical consequences the results of this admission.

Whether the War Office accepts the fact or not, this new situation carries with it the need for a profound and almost revolutionary change in the army scheme of 1901, which was based on a radically different conception—namely, home defence by the regular army. This scheme utilised, indeed, the auxiliary forces to make good the deficiency of regulars in the Third Army Corps, and constructed the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Army Corps very largely from the same elements, stiffened by regulars; and if the object of this organisation had been home defence and nothing more, the method of procedure would have merited praise. It annexed such units as the Militia and Volunteers could supply, and very properly made use of them; but finding them already too numerous for its purpose,

naturally took little pains to foster the further growth and development of either one or the other. On the one hand, it took no steps to check the evils which were contributing to the fast-growing unpopularity of the Militia among the country gentlemen, and among the classes from which the Militia is recruited; and on the other it evinced a desire—nay, more, it arbitrarily determined—to lay a burden upon the Volunteers which necessarily compelled a very large number of officers and men, and unfortunately the best elements of both, to abandon their volunteering, owing to new and unexpected demands upon their time that were antagonistic to the principles upon which the Volunteer force was created, and incompatible with the legitimate claims of the civil avocations of all ranks of the force save in a few specially favoured corps. The failure of the War Office to take any steps to arrest the steady depletion of these forces makes it a legitimate conclusion that the department viewed the event with feelings not far removed from satisfaction; and it was perfectly justified, from its own point of view, in doing so, since it only desired to use, and consequently only recognised the utility of, such units as could, by reason of their adequate field-training in

camps, be relied on to act with the field army of regulars in that world-renowned, grandiose, and also entirely unnecessary *ordre de bataille* on the Surrey Hills.

It was an extraordinarily narrow view, but, such as it was, it justified the air of contemptuous indifference and detachment that the War Office assumed when confronted with the stream of resignations that began to pour in upon Pall Mall. Lord Roberts must have been perfectly well aware that his Army Order of December 1901, even in its amended form, introduced for the first time in the history of the Volunteers the principle of compulsion, offering the alternative of compulsory attendance at camps or dismissal from the force, and that this principle was absolutely and directly in contravention of the whole spirit and intention of the Volunteer movement. The result of this new departure in Pall Mall has been nothing less than deplorable. There has been a growing depletion, month by month and day by day, in the cadres and in the ranks of both Militia and Volunteers. Not a 'Gazette' appears but bears eloquent testimony of the fact, and unless the public takes this affair into its own hands it will inevitably see what is in truth and in deed its citizen army vanish away into the limbo of things forgotten.

Alarmed at last, and inspired by the new influence of his ministerial colleagues on the

Committee of Defence, whose interest in the whole question had been thoroughly aroused by the late debates, Mr Brodric hastily summoned a Committee—the usual refuge of the intellectually destitute—and threw to it the onus of reform of both Militia and Volunteers in a single parcel. Neither the names¹ of the Committee as a whole, nor the union of these two distinct and separate questions in a single inquiry, give any cause for satisfaction or any grounds for extravagant hope. Even were it otherwise, there would still remain the fatal blot of the immature scheme of 1901, which negatives an economical reform of home defence by establishing a military system in which neither Militia nor Volunteers have duties allotted to them in accordance with their clearly defined position in a reasoned scheme of national defence.

It is unfortunately the case that a school exists, with many eminent apostles in Pall Mall, which would view the disappearance of the so-called auxiliary forces with neither disappointment nor misgiving. It is the school that directly or indirectly desires conscription, or, if it avoids the use of the term from the belief that it is odious to the free citizens of a great democracy, falls back on the convenient if sinister subterfuge of some misleading title which in its last terms implies a resort to means of compulsion for the purpose of filling the ranks of one category or other

¹ Since this was written the Earl of March has joined the Committee.

of our armed forces. To this school the failure of our recruiting for the regular army, if failure ensue, and the process of attrition that has been taking place in our auxiliary forces, is meat and drink indeed, since nothing would please it better than to see a Minister come down to the House and confess that all means of voluntary recruiting had failed, and that nothing remained but a resort to some form of compulsory service. It is towards this conclusion that we are fatally and helplessly drifting, like a derelict in the upper reaches of Niagara, with ever-increasing speed, and it is time for those who consider the voluntary principle to be the palladium of our liberties and of our security to arouse themselves from their lethargy and combine to arrest this fatal progress before we are engulfed in the whirlpool ahead.

I am not afraid of conscription, and have no prejudice whatever against the principle it involves. It is the duty of every man to take part in the defence of his country, and if we had a written Constitution, instead of a mere nondescript amalgam of fortuitous precedents, the first article of the faith would establish the principle, and meet with all but universal acceptance from thinking men. If ever this fair realm were trodden by the foot of a conqueror, the manner in which the people would respond to a call to arms would, in my humble judgment, prove the greatest revelation of the century. Over - civilisation ; the

accursed and festering sore of our semi-alien plutocracy, with its nimbus of harpies, hirelings, and hangers-on ; the doctrine of resignation preached by priest and *predikant* to repining indigence and desponding virtue ; the Laodicean indifference of the lower classes to all ideals save those of their own material gratifications,—all these and other causes have not yet brought things to such a pass that we have altogether lost the healthy barbarian instinct of returning blow for blow. That feeling and that tradition are still living forces, dormant but immeasurably powerful, and no reorganisation can be considered adequate that does not touch the masses and prepare the means—translated in their last material terms by the provision of an ample supply of rifles and ammunition—for the complete satisfaction of the popular levy at home and abroad which will clamour for arms at the first note of danger that threatens our national existence in a great war. We are a very long march from the Sermon on the Mount with all its consequences, and, the world being what it is, the old English maxim holds good, Keep peace with thy neighbour, but break not down thy hedge.

Nor can one allow great importance to the objection that conscription lowers the productivity of a nation, by depriving it of hands that would be better employed in the manufacture of wealth. Everything shows that a short term of military service is rather an advantage to a race than the reverse, provided that

the military system is framed on democratic lines; and statistics prove that the physical development of a nation is rather advanced than retarded by the wholesome discipline of well-ordered regimental life. Nor should it be forgotten that, in so far as the withdrawal of working hands from civil life is concerned, our voluntary system of to-day exercises as great detriment upon national production as the conscription of the Continent.

In such comparison it is the peace effective that counts, the men with the colours and withdrawn from their homes, not the reserves who are back in civil life and restored to their normal avocations. If we make a tally of the various forces which we embody and pay in the course of a year throughout the Empire, we shall see that it exceeds those 600,000 men whom France and Germany maintain with the colours on a peace establishment. While, again, a French or German recruit is only withdrawn from civil life for one year or two, we take men for three and up to seven and eight years or longer,—long enough to make them forget their civil trade and not long enough to teach them another. It is, in fact, a thesis that may fairly be argued whether our system does not, on the whole, act more deleteriously upon the wealth-production of the race than the Continental system of conscription.

But with all these premisses of the advocates of conscription admitted to the full, it is not

necessary to admit their conclusions. It is a fact impossible to gainsay that, man for man, a volunteer is a better fighting asset than a conscript. It is also a fact that compulsion is not applicable to service abroad and not required for service at home; and until the advocates of compulsion bring overwhelming evidence to disprove these statements, and show by irrefragable proofs that it is impracticable to defend the Empire on a voluntary basis, we should resist their campaign with all the energy of our convictions and all the strength of the faith that is in us.

Let us briefly examine these points for a moment, for it is manifestly useless to plant until the soil is cleared and prepared. Our military history, which Mr Fortescue is in process of delineating with such rare felicity and admirable truth, is a story to be proud of, since it shows an almost unbroken sequence of victories in all parts of the world, against enemies of every nation, and under every conceivable condition of difficulty. The lesson is plain. The Empire has been won by the voluntary devotion of her adventurous sons, and it has never been seriously imperilled save when it has been at grips with another voluntary system and a people defending its country with all the fierce and redoubtable energy that love of country can bestow upon man.

The conscript armies of Europe have never resisted our arms, not even in that contest of giants when, on the

open rolling plains of Belgium, our hastily gathered Militia stood firm against the bold and reckless onslaught of the war-trained veterans of France, led in person by their emperor, the god—so Clausewitz has termed him—the god of modern war. And why? Because a recruit who enlists of his own free will is a better fighting man than another who is compelled to serve against the bent of his natural inclinations; and because an army of volunteers is superior to an army of conscripts beyond all comparison of relative numbers. Continental nations may scoff and sneer as they will,—the fact remains. If they are forced to act on a contrary principle, it is their misfortune. It is no reason for us to follow them. What is Hecuba to us?

Nor is it practicable to utilise compulsion for service abroad: no country has ever admitted such a proposition, and it is manifestly inadmissible for such an Empire as ours, where one recruit would spend his days in the decorative security of St James's, and another in the fever-swamps, the sun-blistered plains or barren rocks, of some outpost of Empire. Compulsion, it must never be forgotten, spells short service, which can never harmonise with the claims of foreign service, since by the time a recruit is trained and delivered as an efficient unit at his distant garrison it is time to think of sending him home.

For home service, no doubt, compulsion is admissible; but is it necessary? It certainly

should not be necessary with the minimum of foresight and care on the part of a Government. We have a navy which is superior to that of any alliance that is within the sphere of probabilities, even excluding from consideration those countries with which we stand on terms of friendship or alliance. We have the knowledge that our naval programmes are being, and always will be, maintained in a manner to render this privileged position enduring for years to come. If our navy defends our shores against invasion in strength, it follows that we do not require a vast array for home defence: if it does not, then the dissolution of the Empire is accomplished, no matter how many hundreds of thousands of men we may arm at home, nor how many guns of position may be trundling their slow lengths along through Peper-Harrow on their way to the Surrey Hills, in conformity with the wisdom of Mr Brodrick and the ancients of Pall Mall.

We have already half a million men or more in these islands on whose services we can rely, and we have thousands more of trained men now relegated to civil life, with whom all touch has been unwisely lost by an improvident Administration, but whose place is plainly marked with the colours in the hour of danger. It is more than enough to speak with enemies at our gates, and to deal with raiders who may have broken through the meshes of the naval net: even if we

had the ballot we should not want more. A wise farmer only keeps cats that kill mice; as for the others, they cease to be.

The Army Scheme of 1901 was in many ways opposed to the fundamental principles which should guide the action of an Administration charged with the maintenance of the security of a maritime Empire; and its acceptance by the new Committee of Defence, should such a regrettable incident occur, would jeopardise a return to saner ideas, and nullify many of the confident hopes that were aroused by the creation of the new Committee. The radical defect of the first conception was the implied negation of the efficacy of our navy to carry out the duty of defending our shores against invasion in strength from over-sea, and this fundamental misconception still overhangs the whole scheme like a pall. There was also the failure to discriminate between the needs of home defence and service abroad, and the attempted but unsuccessful amalgamation of two separate duties in a single organisation, all of these things being the inevitable consequence of the initial error.

The immediate cause of the parlous state of the Militia and Volunteers, of the vast cost of our armaments, and of the uncompensated chaos which will ensue in time of war if the present situation endures, is to be found in the failure of the War Office to establish their plans for home defence on a Militia basis.

On the departure of the first three Army Corps for the seat of war, the whole of Ireland and the whole of the south of England—districts which will manifestly and clearly become the natural prey of raiders—are bereft of every shred and shadow of military organisation, horse, foot, staff, and artillery, and nothing remains in these districts to carry on the organisation of defence. This vital defect would have been avoided if the Militia, rather than the regular army, had been firmly rooted to the soil and made the body and soul of our home defence, in due conjunction with the Volunteers.

I do not propose to discuss at length the question of the 120,000 men of the first three Army Corps who are ready or unready, as the case may be and the event prove, for service abroad. It is my conviction that, given a statesman at the Foreign Office who believes in Sir Robert Walpole's maxim of *quieta non movere*, and acts upon it as Lord Salisbury always did, we could do with a much smaller number and at a largely decreased cost, provided the Indian army is increased to the line of safety and recruits for foreign service trained at reorganised depots. We have to consider that we are bound to maintain 30,000 men in South Africa for some years to come, and that in view of the growing demands and increasing needs of our position in India, we are confronted with the necessity of increasing the Indian garrison. These are inexorable claims of empire which

remain unsatisfied by the existing organisation, and until they are satisfied it is a departure from all the rules of common-sense to pile up regular forces in the one part of our dominions where they are least wanted.

The Militia and Volunteers should have the exclusive charge of home defence in a national war, and no reform can be considered adequate, still less respond to the growing demand for economy, that does not acknowledge the fact with all its consequences, and translate it, not only by pomp of words but by show of deeds. There are, no doubt, many people who hesitate to believe that a Militia can be safely intrusted with the entire care of home defence, for they hardly realise the changes that are taking place in Europe. The world never stands still; the days of dynastic wars and professional armies are numbered with the past. Everywhere on the Continent the term of service is undergoing reduction: the cause, too, is everywhere the same—namely, the desire to maintain the security of the State at the least personal inconvenience and at the least cost to the people. The progressive parties of the Continent have one and all a perfectly clear programme of action: they desire to make war impossible by destroying standing armies, and they desire to proceed gradually by first reducing these armies to the status of Militia. They have so far succeeded that one year's service will before long become the utmost that any Government will be in a posi-

tion to venture to demand or the mass of the people be prepared to accept: in many countries this term has already been reached for a large proportion of the annual contingent; in others service with the colours is less than a year. Professional armies are dead and buried so far as the rank and file are concerned, and it is the corps of officers on the Continent that alone perpetuates the old traditions. It is therefore permissible for us, with our sea frontier and predominant navy, to follow suit in matters that concern home defence, and to intrust this duty to a Militia made equal to its task. But we are not authorised to apply the same rule to our foreign service army, owing to the millions of subjects of alien races whose destiny we are bound to assure by the provision of a strong force of seasoned troops, worthily representing, whether individually or in the mass, the dignity, power, and majesty of the dominant race.

A Militia whose recruits are trained for six months and whose annual training is a full month, with the faculty for a few weeks' training in winter when employment is hard to obtain, will suffice at home, provided the corps of officers and the permanent cadre of non-commissioned officers are complete in numbers, adequately instructed, and guaranteed such status and such continuous service as will make it worth the while of good men to come forward. In addition, the Militia must be largely and

directly represented at headquarters, where its interests have suffered from want of sympathy and want of understanding. It must, as the force becomes more efficient, be divided into small and handy units of all arms, the Yeomanry forming the mounted branch, and all should be placed in much closer touch and more intimate connection with the counties and local authorities. Nothing would better encourage zeal and promote efficiency than the reservation of the staff appointments, adjutancies, and command of Militia brigades for Militia officers, who will take the necessary time and pains to qualify for these duties once they know they can aspire to them. The Militia, in short, should be the home army, and should be gradually made capable of taking over home defence in its entirety; but this will never be achieved until the Government and the local authorities, particularly of the counties, combine to bend all their efforts to secure the desired result.

But the country will ask for something in return for the cost of a really efficient Militia: it will ask to count the Militia as cats that kill mice. It is evident that the Militia will never be worth its cost under an improved system so long as it is not available for service abroad,—not in normal times or for the ordinary purposes of garrison duty, but solely in case of imminent national danger or emergency, to serve as the reserve and second line of the Army.

Hence it is eminently to be desired that the Militia recruit should be enlisted with a distinct understanding to this effect, rather than be asked to go abroad as a favour, which makes it a matter of impossibility for any Government to lay down plans based on certainties. As things stand it is perfectly possible for the Army to be fighting for its life on some distant frontier, and for Great Britain to be full of armed men, of whom the Militia cannot legally be sent abroad unless it is pleased to approve, nor the Volunteers sent to Ireland. These are the cats who do not kill mice, and we cannot afford to keep them. This position was almost, if not quite, reached towards the close of the late war, when England was full of armed men, and a last call for 10,000 volunteers produced 1500 cats to kill mice. To those who maintain that it is contrary to precedent to enlist Militia for foreign service in a national war, the answer is that we must do unto others as we would they should do unto us: we must oppose the Catechism to the Constitution. We rely, and rightly rely, upon the aid of our Colonies in time of war, and not only of those permanent forces they maintain but of their Militia. In what posture shall we stand in a great war if we ask the Colonies for something that we are not prepared to give ourselves?

When the reorganisation of the Militia is seriously attempted, and the force given the place it deserves and is

manifestly destined eventually to hold in our national defence, the liability to service abroad in the event of a national war will not, in my opinion, deter men from enlisting. It has not been the fighting that has dispirited and disilluminated the Militia, but rather the unfortunate neglect of so many of the recommendations of Militia commanding officers in favour of officers and others who did well in the field under them throughout the campaign. "It was decided," said Mr Brodrick in reply to a question in the House, with the most naïve unconsciousness of the flagrant injustice of the decision—"it was decided that no rewards could be conferred upon Militia regiments sent to South Africa during 1902."

At present, and partly thanks to this decision, which was not communicated to the troops when they embarked, the Militia is something like 2000 officers short of establishment, while the army is some 600 officers over establishment: on one side men without officers, and on the other officers without men. In both Militia and Volunteers the deficiency of men is numbered by tens of thousands. The time seems opportune—to put things mildly—for a reform.

Nor is it quixotic to hope that, with the dawn of a new era in Ireland, it may be deemed expedient to re-establish, at first on a limited and tentative scale, the Irish Volunteers, or at least to utilise the coming class of yeomen farmers to increase the new Irish Yeomanry, so that

we may fill up the Irish gap in our defensive armour and achieve the happiness of defending Ireland by Irishmen.

But before we consent to an increased outlay upon the Volunteers, in one part of the country or another, we must seriously ask ourselves what position in the general scheme of our defence we intend this force to hold. The origin of the Volunteers, as every one knows, goes back to the early middle Victorian epoch, which, in the military as in every other form of art, was not a period of great distinction. Mahan was still, in a literary sense, unborn, and the defence of the realm was considered to devolve upon coast batteries and serried battalions on the Surrey Hills. Those days have long gone by—for all, at least, save the War Office; but the Volunteers remain, clustering immovably upon these ancient fallacies of strategy, like barnacles upon a hulk. If it is our desire to emasculate the force, and reduce it to the residuum of those few favoured corps that are able and willing to respond to the demands of the unfortunate Army Order, then we have nothing to do but sit down and tell sad stories of the death of kings, and the process of attrition will continue. If, on the other hand, we recognise that the Volunteers, properly understood and intelligently treated, are a vital factor in the problem of national defence, then we shall take steps to stay the rot that has set in, and restore the force to the

position it is competent to hold in the defence of the realm.

We can keep 200,000 Volunteers at the price of a brigade of Guards: it is—and the fact is not without its importance—the cheapest form of insurance in the market. Moreover, the Volunteers are the only force we have that is capable of training the mass of the people of the middle classes in the use of the rifle, and of inculcating the rudiments of drill and discipline in the rising generation. For this task they are invaluable; and if the Volunteer force is placed in charge of the men of position and experience who are only too anxious to help if they can make their views prevail, it will give us many of the advantages of conscription with none of its defects. It should be our constant aim to broaden the basis of our military power by forming a reservoir of men in *all* classes trained to the use of arms, so that, in a great campaign, we may be able to rely upon their services in the last resort to replenish the ranks of our armies in the field, and thus be enabled to fight through a national war on a national basis.

But at this moment the War Office has views upon the strategical uses of Volunteers which can only be described as purblind by unwarrantable flattery. It has invested the best part of our Volunteer capital in that fantastic folly the "Defence of London" scheme, which is

based on the precedent of the battle of Hastings, and is only saved from coming within the scope of the criminal law by that prerogative of pardon in seclusion which a paternal legislation provides for demonstrated dementia.

In a national war the Field Army and its reserves will leave home first: if they are insufficient the Militia and Yeomanry will follow in due course, and it is only then, perhaps some time after the declaration of war, that the Volunteers will be called upon in their turn to take over the defence, not of London, but of the country. They do not, therefore, require the provision of transport and other material on the same scale as the other forces, but they do require to have a system under which all that is necessary to enable them to take the field can be provided without undue delay. They require, also, not guns of position, but good, quick-firing, mobile field artillery, and a larger proportion of cyclists than at present, since this latter branch will be capable, in our islands, of undertaking all the duties which devolve upon mounted troops in a war abroad.

The Active Army is the First Line, the Militia and Yeomanry the Second Line, the Volunteers the Third Line: each force has its place clearly marked in the economy of national defence, and it is high time we recognised the fact, and ceased to invert the *rôles* and confuse the issues.

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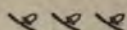
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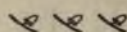
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